

*D. Murphy*  
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THE  
**RELIGIOUS MONITOR,**

AND  
**EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY:**

**DEVOTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION,**

**AS SET FORTH IN THE**

**Formularies of the Westminster Divines,**

**AND OF THE**

**CHURCHES OF HOLLAND.**

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Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. JER. VI. 16

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**ALBANY :**

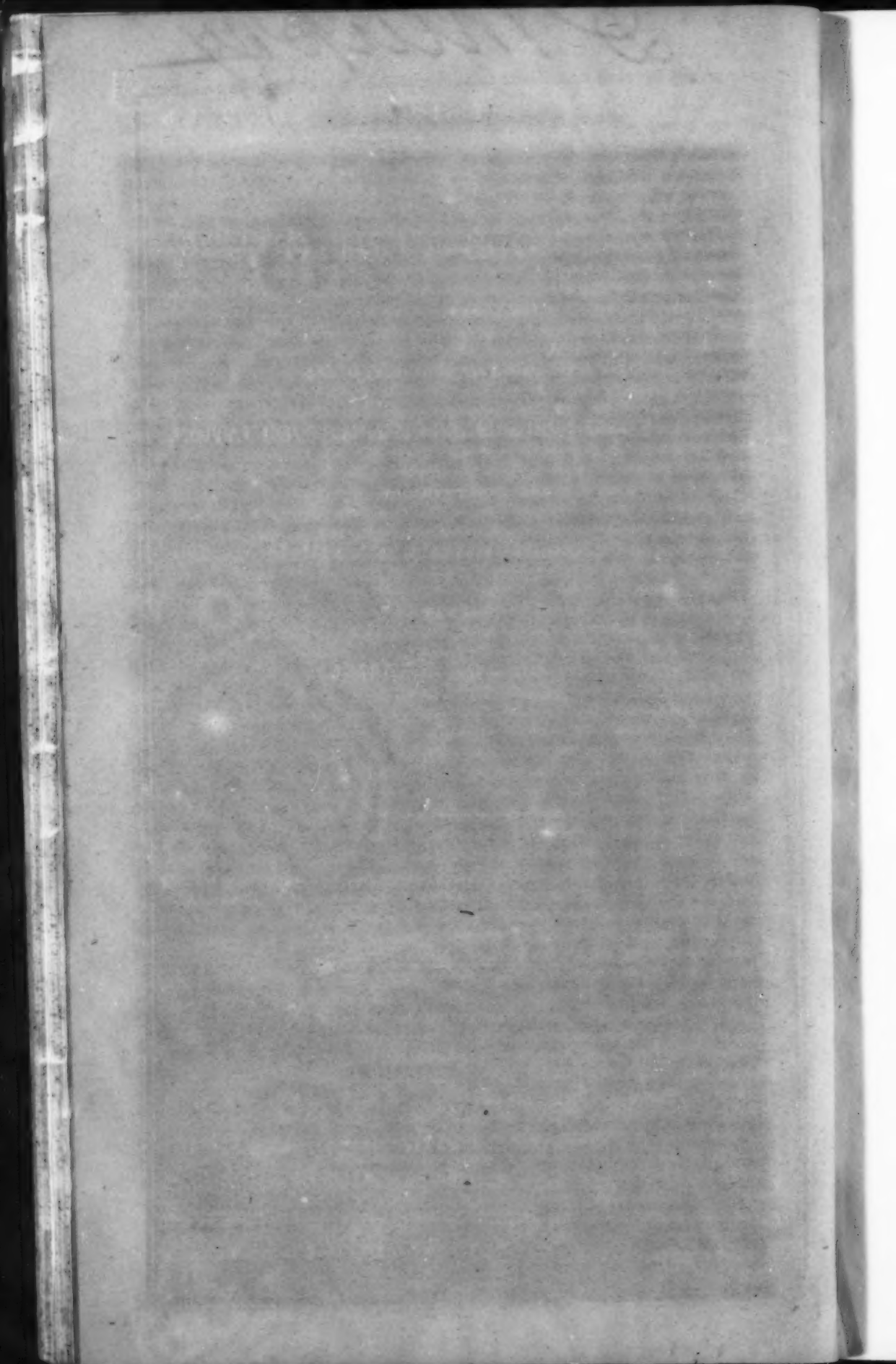
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THE

## RELIGIOUS MONITOR,

AND

EVANGELICAL REPOSITORY.

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JULY, 1834.

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ART. I. *Some improper or doubtful expressions considered.*

(Continued from page 20.)

VII. Another improper expression in use, sometimes, in prayer, is in addressing the object of prayer, "thou who hast died for us."

A three in one God is the object of prayer, but a three in one God did not die for us. An address of this kind might answer in the prayer of a Swedenborgian, who denies a trinity of persons in Godhead, turning the trinity of persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, into a trinity of essences, so as that the Godhead, who is the divine essence, called the Father, or Creator, being united to the human essence is what is called the Son and Redeemer, according to his view of this sacred mystery. But it is not suitable in the prayer of a sound trinitarian. Because the Godhead is the proper object of prayer, and not so much as this is in any one person in distinction from the rest, but as it is in all the three persons equally. When prayer is addressed to any of the persons of the trinity, more immediately, as sometimes the Father is the person addressed, or the Son, or the Holy Ghost, it is not as a distinct person of trinity, but as the Godhead is in that person; and the Godhead or the other persons are to be considered as addressed through him. The Father is the more immediate object generally addressed, and to be addressed through the Son by the Holy Spirit.

VIII. Many, in prayer, seek a covenant right to their temporal mercies, and in asking a blessing upon their meals, seek a new covenant right to the blessing before them. This would suppose that the mercies in themselves are new covenant blessings, because the things men have their right to through the covenant of grace are unquestionably in themselves new covenant blessings; blessings which, through the obedience and death of Christ, they can only obtain, and are purchased blessings; because it is through the purchase of Christ that men have their right to those things they obtain through the covenant of grace, together with the presentation of them as covenant blessings in the gospel, and promise of enjoying them, laying before them their warrant to make use of them. But the things we have in Christ and through the covenant of grace are not temporal things or common mercies of providence. Of believers who only are made partakers of the blessings which come through that covenant, it is said, that "God the Father hath blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ." The blessings of the covenant of grace are peace, pardon, justification, sanctification, communion with God; and in a

word all grace here and glory hereafter; and no blessings besides are mentioned, as coming to us by Christ, or through the covenant of grace, in the word of God. These are the things which the gospel, which proposes the blessings of the covenant of grace to us treats of; and the bestowment of them upon us by God, as the God of providence, who feeds the ravens, and fills the young lions that cry unto him, gives men their right to them. A new covenant blessing, which we are to seek upon the things already received and before us in the goodness of providence for our use, and the right to them are altogether different.

The very names given to them in the common usage of mankind, if at all appropriate, shew that the right which persons have to them, lies in the possession of them as bestowed upon them in providence, for their use. They are called common benefits, common mercies, and the blessings of a common providence, names given unto them to distinguish them from those far more precious blessings, which the gospel reveals, and offers to men, and which believers have their right to, and possession of, through the covenant of grace. The right of all to these things, according to the measure in which they are bestowed upon them, is so certain, that it is made their duty to use them for the maintenance of life, and for their outward comfort and benefit, as blessings of God's providence, bestowed upon them, for these ends and not to do so would be their sin. The man though a wicked man, would in common reckoning, and according to the express tenor of the word of God, be guilty of a breach of the 6th Commandment, who would because he is wicked, and proves himself to be so, deny himself the use of the daily means of life, having them bestowed upon him in providence for this end.

There appears to me to be a particular propriety, in taking notice of this expression, as it is an expression which has been much and long in use, in the religious exercises I have mentioned, in which we are to have our words few and well ordered, as we address our Heavenly Father in them; and as the doctrine of the covenant right to these things has been taught by many Divines of note, and, even among Seceders it is an expression much in use, though evidently in flat contrariety to their own publicly professed principles, which imply and teach the contrary. To say that others than believers have no proper right to these things, and that believers have a new covenant right to them, is either truth or error. That it carries in it the appearance of error, I think I have shewn in a way which will satisfy those who lie open to conviction on the subject.

Were the doctrine of the covenant right in itself a truth, the expression as it is used in prayer and in asking a blessing, upon our meals would still be improper upon the principle I plead, in a former number of these papers, as a believer in his addresses to God would be seeking what, upon this supposition he has already, and believes belongs to his state as a justified person. The believer's rights which are connected with his justified state, are not variable things, which have need to be renewed every day. They have not to be sought every time he prays to God in the things themselves, but in the evidences of them. But as it is an untruth, the petition in every view that may be taken of it, is improper.

In connexion with the preceding we might take into consideration another expression, which is also frequently made, which is, that *man forfeited his right by sin to the common benefits of life, and by breach of the covenant of works*. The thing assumed being taken for granted, this is used often as a proof that a person's right to these things again comes through Christ, and by virtue of the covenant of grace. There is no warrant for this expression, that can be brought from the scriptures, that I can find, which are the only foundation of our faith, in the whole matters of truth and duty. Life was promised indeed to Adam, in the way of his keeping



the covenant of works and the means of life, were supposed by that promise to be given and continued with man, for the support of that life, so long as they were to be necessary. And death on the other hand was threatened in case of disobedience. But the death threatened as the event shewed was not instant death as to the full execution of the sentence, as death temporal was included in the death he was to die, should he break the covenant. Therefore, his temporal life being continued, the means of its support were to be continued and his right to use them, from the very fact of its continuance; and his being provided with them, that he might use them for this purpose, is supposed. Death and life were only properly the things, the covenant of works, had a respect to in the threatening and promise, or the matters to which the threatening and promise of that covenant referred; and the means of life, as Adam had them in innocence, and as man still has them, were accidental, not necessary to even the preservation of the life of man, beyond the will of God, who is pleased that they be so now, as they were to Adam before the fall. And who knows if Adam had kept the covenant of works, so as that he and his posterity had come unto the fuller enjoyment of the life promised, these things had been no more necessary for the support of that life, he was to enjoy as the fruit of his obedience? We know that in heaven the bodies of the saints will not need to eat and drink for their sustenance, as we do now. And perhaps had Adam kept the covenant so as that the promised blessings had come upon himself, according to the tenor of that covenant, and upon his posterity; eating and drinking as an employment as it is necessary, now had been no more required by them, nor labour for the purpose of obtaining those things any more used: But as the saints in heaven are employed, and even will be employed in spiritual exercises serving God day and night in his temple above, Adam and his posterity had in a similar way been employed. The life of man being maintained by meat and drink, and other material things, for the comfort and health of his body, being necessary to him in his present or worldly state, as so much of them were necessary to Adam in innocence, and labour necessary to the acquiring of these, seems to be owing to the state of trial Adam was in, and to temptations to which mankind are now exposed, to afford them employment which might be useful to them in keeping them out of the way of temptation, which, being more at leisure they would be more endangered by, and to which through the corruption that is in man, they would now fall a ready prey in such a case. And as when the day of the believer's temptations will have come to an end, eating and drinking as means of life, and labour to acquire these things, will be no more necessary, so had Adam continued in obedience until the time of his trial was finished, in *all* probability these things had been no more necessary. Witsius in his economy of the covenants, Boston in his Fourfold State, and Fisher and Erskine on the question "what special act of providence did God exercise towards man when he was created?" in the 28th question of their explanation of that question, in the shorter Catechism, with others, think that the life promised in the covenant of works was eternal life in heaven, and conclude that this was the case from the contrary threatening implying eternal death in it, and from the consideration of the declaration of our Lord to the young man in the gospel, on enquiring of him what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life, "if thou wilt enter into life keep the commandments," and also from the commandment being said to be ordained unto life, in (Rom. vii. 10,) though the Apostle found it in his own experience as a fallen sinner to be unto death. And if so, these things could not in any sense be included in the promise of that covenant, as in this case, the promise would have begun its accomplishment if man had kept the covenant, only after

the course of obedience was finished, which he had to pass through, in his probationary state. But these things being not necessary in an heavenly state, to higher and better things it was confined. Indeed Adam had an advantage arising from his obedience at the very time he was giving it, as "In keeping the commandments there is a reward."—But that could not properly be said to be a covenant reward, as the condition was not fulfilled that was to entitle him to this, according to the free promise of God, implied in the covenant itself. It was but the reward that naturally attends a life of obedience to God, irrespective of any covenant obligations of his to that effect.

But laying aside the argument which would arise from supposition, that the life promised is eternal life in heaven, which Adam had entered upon immediately after he had passed the time of his trial, it does not appear from any consideration of Adam's situation as in a state of innocence. The word *forfeited* signifies the right to a thing lost, by some default in the person who loses the right. Man in innocence had no right to these things he enjoyed beyond the will and pleasure of God to continue them with him. The covenant of works gave him no right to them, as they were but mere accidents in connexion with the life promised to man, in virtue of his keeping that covenant, and not necessary, but in virtue of the will and pleasure of God, that they should be the means of that life promised so far as temporal life was embraced in it. And now that man possesses them according to the same good pleasure of God, his right to them is as good as ever. It arises, as it ever did, from his possessing them as bestowed upon him in providence, as the means of life and outward comfort to him in his present worldly condition, wherein he stands in need of them for this purpose.

Moreover some of these very common benefits, we might say a very considerable share of them, so far from being forfeited by man's sin, by man's sin only, they have become needful, as our clothing had not been necessary but for the sin of man, houses to shelter us from the storm, medicines for our bodies in sickness, weapons of war, fleets and armies for our country's defence; a civil magistracy to preserve peace and order in civil society, our court houses, our jails and penitentiaries had not been necessary but for this. And the gospel, one of the greatest outward mercies we enjoy, had not been necessary, nor we enjoyed it, but through the sin of man making way for our need of it, and being the reason why the Lord in the riches of his love and mercy has provided us with it.

We find that the very curse as it is pronounced upon man after the fall, is pronounced in such a way as teaches that his right to these things was not lost to him, through this means, as in pronouncing it on the earth for his sake he is required to till it, and warranted to expect, though with much sorrow, labour and trouble, a return in this way for his maintenance, "cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life."

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#### ART. II. Watt's Preface to the Psalms.

MR. EDITOR—On recently looking over an old library I met with the following preface, written by I. W. WATTS, D. D., and prefixed to the 24th edition of his works, entitled "*Hymns and Spiritual Songs*," printed in Glasgow, A. D. 1770, by R. & T. Duncan.

I am of opinion, that, in this day eminent for investigation, that document should come into judgment, and be disposed of according to truth,

because it contains the reasons, be they good or bad, why human songs, or human imitations of divine songs, were introduced into the worship of the General Assembly Church.

I have also thought that it might not be unprofitable to append some strictures to a few of the exceptionable parts of it, for the purpose of inviting the attention of the reader more closely to it; for its believed that nothing more is necessary for the condemnation of human Psalmody, in the visible church, with all that has accompanied this practice, than an attentive reading of this preface. I am now prepared to assert, and expect to prove, that the reasons contained in the preface, for the introduction of human compositions into the praises of God, are all without foundation in truth, and are based on ignorance and infidelity. This may seem a hard charge to allege against so large and respectable a portion of Christians as is contained in that church; yet it is hoped that they will not suffer such smiting to break their heads, as this would disqualify them from giving a patient and intelligent hearing to the reasons which shall be adduced in support of these charges. Why this preface of the Doctor's has been suppressed from its original object, which was to introduce his human compositions at all times into the praises of worship, all upon reading it, may judge for themselves.

I shall now give the preface and append the strictures.

#### PREFACE.

"While we sing the praises of our God in his church, we are employed in that part of worship, which of all others is the nearest akin to heaven; and it is a pity that this of all others, should be performed the worst upon earth. The gospel brings us nearer the heavenly state, than all the former dispensations of God amongst men: and in these last days of the gospel, we are almost within sight of the kingdom of our Lord, yet we are very much unacquainted with the songs of the New Jerusalem, and unpracticed in the work of praise. To see the dull indifference, the negligent and thoughtless air, that sits upon the faces of the whole assembly, while the Psalm is upon their lips, might tempt even a charitable observer to suspect the fervency of inward religion; and it is much to be feared, that the minds of most of the worshippers are absent or unconcerned. Perhaps the modes of preaching in the best churches, still want some degrees of reformation; nor are the methods of prayer so perfect as to stand in need of no correction or improvement, but of all our religious solemnities Psalmody is the most unhappily managed. That very action which should elevate us to the most delightful sensation, doth not only flatten our devotion, but too often awaken our regret, and touches all the springs of uneasiness within us.

"I have long been convinced that one great occasion of this evil arises from the matter and words to which we confine all our songs, some of them are almost opposite to the spirit of the gospel, many of them foreign to the state of the New Testament, and widely different from the present circumstances of Christians. Hence it comes to pass, that when spiritual affections are excited within us, and our souls are raised a little above this earth, in the beginning of a Psalm, we are checked on a sudden in our ascent toward heaven, by some expressions that are most suited to the days of carnal ordinances and fit only to be sung in the worldly sanctuary. When we are just entering into an evangelical frame by some of the glories of the gospel, presented in the brightest figures of judaism; yet the very next line perhaps which the clerk parcels out unto us, hath something in it so extremely jewish and cloudy that darkens our sight of God the Saviour. Thus by keeping too close to David in the house of God, the veil of Moses is thrown over our hearts. While we are kindling into divine love by the meditations of the "loving kindness of God and the multitude of his tender mercies," within a few verses some dreadful curse against men is proposed to our lips, "that God would add iniquity unto their iniquity, nor let them come into thy righteousness, but blot them out of the book of the living," Psalm. cix. 26, 27, 28, which is so contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies; and even under the old Testament is best accounted for, by referring it to the spirit of prophetic vengeance. Some instances of the Psalmist, that are expressive of the temper of our own hearts, and the circumstances of our lives, may compose our spirits to seriousness, and allure us to sweet retirement within ourselves; but we meet with a following line, which so peculiarly belongs but to one action or hour of the life of David or of Asaph, that breaks off our song in the midst, our consciences are affrighted, lest we should speak a falsehood unto God; thus the powers of our souls are shocked on a sudden and our spirits ruffled, before we have time to re-

flect that this may be sung only as a history of ancient Saints, and perhaps, in some instances, that salvo is hardly sufficient either; besides, it almost always spoils the devotion by breaking the uniform thread of it; for while our lips and our hearts run on sweetly together, applying the words to our case, there is something of divine delight in it; but at once we are forced to turn off the application abruptly, and our lips speak nothing but the heart of David. Thus our own hearts are, as it were, forbid the pursuit of the song, and then the harmony and the worship grows dull of mere necessity.

"Many ministers and private Christians, have long groaned under this inconvenience, and have wished, rather than attempted a reformation; at their importunate and repeated requests, I have, for some years past, devoted many hours of leisure to this service. Far be it from my thoughts to lay aside the book of Psalms in public worship, few can pretend so great a value for them as myself; it is the most devotional, and divine collection of poesy, and nothing can be supposed more proper to raise a pious soul to Heaven, than some parts of that book; never was a piece of experimental divinity so nobly written and so justly revered and admired; but it must be acknowledged still that there is a thousand lines in it, which were not made for a church in our days to assume as its own: there are also many deficiencies of light and glory, which our Lord Jesus and his apostles have supplied in the New Testament; and with this advantage I have composed these spiritual songs; which are now presented to the world. Nor is the attempt vain-glorious, or presuming; *the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than all the Jewish prophets*, (Math. xi: 11.)

"Now let me give a short account of the following composures.

"The greatest part of them are suited to the general state of the gospel, and the most general affairs of Christians. I hope that there will be very few found but what may properly be used in a religious assembly, and not one of them but may well be adapted to some seasons, either of private or public worship. The most frequent tempers and changes of our spirits, and conditions of our life, are here copied, and the breath of our piety expressed according to the variety of our passions, our love, our peace, our hope, our desire, our sorrow, our wonder and our joy, as they are refined into devotion, and act under the influence and conduct of the blessed Spirit; all conversing with God the Father by the new and living way of access to the throne, even the person and Mediator of our Lord Jesus Christ. To him also even to the *Lamb that was slain, and now lives*, I have addressed many a song; for thus doth the holy Spirit instruct and teach us to worship in the various short patterns of christian psalmody described in the Revelations. I have avoided the more obscure and controverted points of Christianity, that we might all obey the directions of the word of God, and sing his praise with understanding, (Psalm, xlvii: 7.) The contentions and distinguishing words of sects and parties are secluded; that whole assemblies might assist at the harmony, and different churches join in the same worship without offence.

"If any expressions occur to the reader, that savour of an opinion different from his own, yet he may observe, these are generally such as are capable of an extensive sense and may be used with a charitable latitude. I think it is most agreeable, that what is provided for public singing, should give to sincere consciences as little disturbance as possible. However, when any displeasing word is found, he that leads the worship may substitute a better, for (blessed be God,) we are not confined to the words of any man in our public solemnities.

"The whole book is written in four sorts of metre, and fitted to the most common tunes. I have seldom permitted a stop in the middle of a line, and seldom left the end of a line without one, to comport a little with the unhappy mixture of reading and singing which cannot presently be reformed. The metaphors are generally sunk to the level of vulgar capacities. I have aimed at ease of numbers, and smoothness of sound, and endeavored to make the sense plain and obvious. If the verse appears so gentle and flowing as to incur the censure of feebleness, I may honestly affirm that sometimes it cost me labor to make it so, some of the beauties of poesy are neglected, and some wilfully defaced; I have thrown out the lines that were too sonorous, and have given an allay to the verse, lest a more exalted turn of thought or language should darken or disturb the devotion of the weakest souls. But hence it comes to pass, that I have been forced to lay aside many hymns after they were finished, and utterly exclude them from this volume, because of the bolder figures of speech that crowded themselves into the verse, and a more unconfined variety of numbers which I could not easily restrain.

"These with many other divine and moral composures, are now printed in a second edition of the poems entitled, *Horæ Lyricæ*; for as in that book I have endeavored to please and profit the polite part of mankind, without offending the plainer sort of Christians, so in this it hath been my labour to promote the pious entertainment of souls truly serious even of the meanest capacity, and at the same time (if possible) not to give disgust to persons of finer sense and nicer education, and I hope in the present volume, this will appear to be pursued with much greater happiness than in the first



impression of it, though the world assures me the first has not much reason to complain.

"The whole is divided into three books.

"In the first I have borrowed the sense and much of the form of the song from some particular portions of scripture, and have paraphrased most of the doxologies of the New Testament, that contain any thing in them peculiarly evangelical; and many parts of the Old Testament also, that have a reference to the times of the Messiah. In these I expect to be often censured, for too religious observance of the words of scripture, whereby the verse is weakened and debased, according to the judgment of critics, but as my whole design was to aid the devotion of christians, so more especially in this part; and I am satisfied I shall hereby attain two ends, *viz* :—assist the worship of all serious minds, to whom the expressions of scripture are ever dear and delightful, and gratify the taste and inclination of those who think nothing must be sung unto God, but the translations of his own word. Yet you will always find in this paraphrase dark expressions enlightened, and Levitical ceremonies and Hebrew forms of speech changed into the worship of the gospel, and explained in the language of our time and nation, and what would not bear such an explanation is omitted and laid aside. After this manner should I rejoice to see a good part of the book of Psalms fitted for the use of our churches and David converted into a Christian; but because I cannot persuade others to attempt this glorious work, I have suffered myself to be persuaded to begin it, and have, through divine goodness, proceeded half way through.

The second part consists of hymns, whose form is mere human composure; but I hope the sense and materials will always appear divine. I might have brought some text or other, and applied it to every verse, if this method had been as useful as it was easy. If there be any poems in the book that are capable of giving delight to persons of a more refined taste and polite education, perhaps they may be found in this part; but except they lay aside the humour of criticism and enter into a devout frame every ode here already despairs of pleasing. I confess myself to have been too often tempted away from the more spiritual designs I proposed by some gay and flowing expressions that gratified the fancy. The bright images too often prevailed above the fire of divine affection, and the light exceeded the heat, yet I hope in many of them the reader will find that devotion dictated the song, and the head and hand were nothing but interpreters and secretaries to the heart, nor is the magnificent boldness of the figures, comparable to that divine license which is found in the eighteenth and sixty-eighth Psalms, several chapters of Job, and other poetical parts of scripture, and in this respect I may hope to escape the reproof of those who pay a sacred reverence to the holy Bible.

"I have prepared the third part only for the celebration of the Lord's supper, that in imitation of our blessed Saviour we may sing a hymn after we have partaken of the bread and wine. Here you will find some paraphrases of scripture and some other compositions. There are above a hundred hymns in the two former parts that may be very properly used in this ordinance, and perhaps sometimes appear more suitable than any of these last, but there are expressions generally used in these, which confine them generally to the table of the Lord, and therefore I have distinguished and set them by themselves.

"If the Lord who inhabits the praises of Israel shall refuse to smile on this attempt for the reformation of Psalmody amongst the churches, yet I humbly hope, that his blessed Spirit will make these composes useful to private Christians; and if they but attain the honor of being esteemed pious meditations, to assist the devout and retired soul in the exercises of love, faith, and joy, it will be a valuable compensation of my labours; my heart shall rejoice at the notion of it and my God shall receive the glory. This was my hope and view in my first publication; and it is now my duty to acknowledge to him with thankfulness how useful he has made these compositions already, to the comfort and edification of societies and of private persons; and upon the same ground I have a better prospect, and a bigger hope of much more exalted service to the church, by the large improvements of this edition, if the Lord who dwells in Zion, shall favour it with his continued blessing.

"Note in all longer Hymns, and in some of the shorter, there are several stanzas included in crotchets thus [ ]; which stanzas may be left out in singing without disturbing the sense. Those parts are also included in such crotchets, which contain words too poetical for meaner understandings, or too particular for whole congregations to sing. But after all it is best in public Psalmody, for the minister to choose the particular parts and verses of the Psalm or Hymn that is to be sung, rather than to leave it to the judgment or casual determination of him that leads the tune.

"Note since the sixth edition of this book the author has finished what he had so long promised, *viz* : the Psalms of David imitated in the language of the New Testament; which the world seems to have received with approbation, by the sale of some thousands in a year's time. It is presumed that that book, in conjunction with this, may appear to be such a sufficient provision for Psalmody, as to answer most occasions

of the Christian's life; and if an author's own opinion may be taken, he esteems it the greatest work that ever he has published or ever hopes to do, for the use of the churches." "March 3, 1720"

*The first section contains the complaint.* It is very evident from the second sentence of this section, with many such expressions throughout the preface, that one of the radical causes of the Doctor's discontent with the book of Psalms, as containing exclusively the songs for divine worship, was his ignorance of the commencement of the gospel day; for he always speaks of it as beginning with the New Testament; but this is a mistake, for the gospel day commenced in Paradise, before yet our first parents were thrust out. The holy Spirit saith in the epistle to the Heb. ch. iv. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them," (meaning the Jews); their day was a gospel day as well as ours. If the doctor had known this, he would not have been so hampered with the gospel Psalms, divinely given in the former dispensation. The concluding sentence of this section clearly proves to my mind the doctor's ignorance of the nature of praise in the church *militant* as distinct from that of the church *triumphant*. See his words "that very action which should elevate to the most delightful and divine sensation, doth not only *flatten* our devotion, but too often awakens our *regret*, and touches all the springs of *uneasiness* within us." This sentence contains the second defective operation of the doctor's mind, when he was moving toward the *ark* to give it an unholy touch. If the doctor instead of slandering the book of Psalms, had made them the subject of meditation, he would have discovered in the 101st Psalm, 1st verse, that distinction in these words, "I will sing of mercy and judgment." The song of the church militant should often have *regret*, or *repentance*, in it. She has of right her penitential Psalms, and this *regret*, instead of putting her away from her Lord, brings her nearer to him. See the 34th Psalm, 18th verse: "The Lord is nigh to them that be of a *broken heart*, and loveth such as be of a contrite spirit."

*The second section accounts for the complaint.* In this section he brings his *railing accusation* against many of the Psalms. See his words; "I have long been convinced, that one great occasion of this evil arises from the *matter and words* to which we confine all our songs, some of them are *almost opposite* to the *spirit* of the gospel." Yea altogether opposite; see about the middle of this section, where he quotes a portion of one of the Lord's songs, which he says "is so *contrary* to the *new commandment* of loving our enemies." See at the last of the section where he says, speaking of many of the divine songs, they "speak nothing but the heart of David." "Many of them are *foreign* to the state of the New Testament Church, and widely different from the present circumstances of Christians." See another portion of the same section, to the same effect, "we meet with a following line which so peculiarly belongs but to one action, or hour of the life of David, or of Asaph, that breaks off our song in the midst, our consciences are *affrighted*, lest we should speak a *falsehood* unto God."

I shall now sketch those reasons why Hymns of human composure and imitations of divine songs were introduced into the General Assembly Church, in the room of the *Lord's* songs, and sustain my charges against them, that they are founded on ignorance, or what is worse, infidelity!

The first objection lies against the *matter* of many of the divine songs. Now I ask all intelligent persons but infidels, if Christ either mediately or immediately, is not the entire matter of the book of Psalms? Take Christ out of the book of Psalms and you have nothing but the husk, he is, in one of these ways, alluded to, in every word. When he was confirming the faith of his disciples, as *it is written* in Luke xxiv. 44; aware that the mouth of slander would be opened against the Psalms of Zion, as not

speaking of him, he testified that they did, taking care to quote them by *name* which he did not do respecting the other scriptures there alluded to, but gave them the general appellation of law and prophets. Then ignorance or infidelity alone could have generated a charge against the *matter* of the book of Psalms seeing it is Christ.

The second charge lies against the words. Let us try this one by what is *written*. See Psalm xiii. 6., "The words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace of earth purified seven times;" from which it appears that the Holy Spirit gave that book a shield to defend it from the doctor's arrows. Therefore, ignorance or infidelity alone could have originated this charge; for if the poetical translation of the Psalms has destroyed their inspiration, we have no inspiration in our English Bible, and are therefore in heathenish darkness.

The third reason for antiquating *many* of the book of Psalms is, that they are almost opposite to the spirit of the gospel, yea altogether "*contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies*, and "*speaking nothing but the heart of David*." Heavy charges indeed to bring against the word of God, which, if true, would not only be sufficient to exclude those *many* from being used in praise, but with equal and sufficient force from the list of inspiration. But let us see what is *written* in the second epistle of Peter i. 21. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works." Now in the presence of these scriptures, what but ignorance or infidelity could have moved the doctor to use the expression referred to. Now let us look at the 69th Psalm, selected by the doctor as a specimen of the *many* that are *contrary to the spirit of the gospel* and of the *new commandment*. This Psalm, which, perhaps of all others, contains the most pointed allusions to the sufferings of Christ upon the cross, and immediately preceeding it, (and as an evidence of this, it is frequently used at the dispensation of the supper, where divine songs are preferred,) commences in the words of the divine antitype, by David the type, and sweet Psalmist of Israel, in which he pours out his plaint to his father, in immediate view of the bloody baptism with which he was about to be baptised, that so greatly *strengthened* him until it was *accomplished*. Having just survived the horrid night he spent in the garden of Gathsemane, in which his soul was *exceedingly sorrowful even unto death*, and still more dreadful scenes being at hand. Judas had now betrayed him with his deceitful kiss. Caiaphas, upon whose head was poured the sacred perfume at the expense of the *victim* of his cruelty, by whom he had been raised to the highest earthly dignity in the church militant, had now through *envy* delivered his kind benefactor to Pilate for crucifixion, who, well knowing that he had been delivered through *envy*, condemned him to death on a verdict of innocence, contrary to all law. Added to all this, these sufferings were vindictive; Caiaphas and Pilate being but the officers to bring to pass the *determinate council and fore-knowledge* of God. This awful combination of circumstances let the waters into the soul of Christ, in the first verse of the Psalm; and in the second, into deep mire where there was no standing, and into deep waters that overflowed him; and so he proceeds in this mournful song, conflicting with his unparalleled sorrows, until in the 21st verse he received the gall and vinegar, *peculiar* to his sufferings on the cross; and while in another portion of inspiration, he is represented as praying for his *elect* enemies, he is here represented as praying *against* his *reprobate* foes. And Oh believer! of what use would Christ's prayers be for you, if he did not pray against your enemies? The latter prayer is as essential for his glory and your

good, as the former. This should have been the very last Psalm selected, as containing reasons why the New Testament worshipper should lay aside, as *songs*, many of the Psalms, as there is no piece of inspiration in which the interests of Zion are more deeply rooted, as it is a Psalm of the cross. Now let us look at those verses, singled out by the Doctor, as his *mock*, at which to let fly his arrows, taken from the quiver of infidelity.—They are the 26th, 27th and 28th verses, which he says is so *contrary* to the *new commandment* of loving our enemies. One would have indeed reasonably thought, that it never would have been necessary to produce arguments to a professed Christian, to prove that the laws of God were in no sense contrary to each other; but the Doctor's assertions against these verses has prevented us from realizing such a reasonable hope.

Let us apply to the standard, and see what *is written* in the 5th Chap. of Matthew, 17th verse, where Christ, who knew all things, knew "that of our own selves, men would arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them," and you will find him conflicting with, and overcoming the very error assumed by the Doctor; which is, that Christ came to give *new commandments*, *contrary* to the *old*. Now Christ says this was a slander, for he came not to *destroy* the law, but to *fulfil* it; and then proceeded to the second table, the sum of which *is*, and *ever* was, love to our neighbour.

To shew that he was more for the law than they were, he commences with the 6th commandment, shewing that it applied to the thoughts and words, as well as to actual murder. And here for correct understanding, it is necessary to notice that in this comment of our Lord on a number of the precepts of the divine law, with a view to correct abuses, that when he spoke of precepts, as they were in the divine law, he identified them by the "*words of old time*;" but when he alludes to those things that existed either by permission, as in the case of divorce, or loss of teeth, or that existed by an ignorant view of the law, as in hating enemies, he omits the words of *old time*, and only uses the words *it hath been said*. In the 43d verse Christ sets out the false doctrine, and marks it as such, by omitting the words of *old time*, and merely stating *it hath been said*, thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy; the former part being true in and of itself, but not true as a criterion to determine the proper objects of love. For the Jews falsely believed the word *neighbor* applied only to their nation, and its friends. See their error on this point confuted at large in the 10th Chapter of Luke, where Christ, in answer to the question, *Who is my neighbor?* showed that it might mean a Samaritan, a people always hated by the Jews. See a statute given to them of *old times*, 23d Chapter of Deuteronomy, 7th verse: "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, nor an Egyptian." This *new commandment* is only a *renewed* commandment that was as old as the law of nature, and rehearsed for the purpose of warding off slanders.

It necessarily follows from the above, that the Jews were as much bound to love their enemies as we are; and if so, the Old Testament worshipper had the same cause of complaint that we have to many of the Psalms, (of which this 69th is a specimen,) and therefore should have hunted for some *Doctor* to have removed the *cause of disease*, by stretching forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and turning *David* into a *Christian*. From all which it appears that this objection of the doctor was founded in ignorance of his Bible. I have said enough on this objection to satisfy the intelligent Christian, that it is anti-scriptural; and as to the ignorant or infidel class of men, I have nothing to expect from them.

[To be Continued.]



ART. III. *Observations on Remarks on Dr. Bullions' Tract on Repentance.*

"A critic was of old a glorious name,  
Whose sanction handed merit up to fame;  
Beauties as well as faults he brought to view:  
His judgment great, and great his candour too.  
But now, O strange reverse! our critics bawl  
In praise of candor with a heart of gall."—Churchill.

IT has been reckoned the duty of a candid Reviewer to dwell on the excellencies as well as the defects of his author—to point out his elegancies, as well as to note his blemishes, and so to treat his work that "beauties as well as faults be brought to view." But it is the characteristic of a critic of little taste, or learning, that he studiously passes over whatever may be most worthy of approbation in the writings of an author, while he diligently hunts out and magnifies little mistakes and inaccuracies. Nay if an elegant, or bold and glowing expression; a *verbum ardens* as Cicero would have said, is to be found in a whole book, it is like to be the very expression that our undiscerning critic will attack with the greatest severity.

A rather curious specimen of this sort of criticism appeared in the May number of the Religious Monitor. It is entitled "Remarks on an article headed 'Repentance, a Tract, by the Rev. Alexander Bullions, D. D., Cambridge, New-York,' in the 7th and 8th Nos. of the present volume of the Monitor." As it can scarcely be expected, that any thing like a review of a review can be a welcome article to the editor of a periodical, in what follows I will study the utmost brevity, that I may occupy but little space in your pages.

The Reviewer seems to take exception to the author's name and titles being appended to his work. But it is difficult to see why he should be blamed for this. It is a mere matter of taste, and according to the proverb—*De gustibus nil disputandum*. Besides, it accords well with the bold and honest character of the author of this tract, to state his sentiments openly. Sometimes also when a person's name is no way celebrated, and he may have no title to annex to it, he may be willing to conceal it like this reviewer and myself; none of which things may have any weight with an author who has been dignified with the title of D. D. But passing this, which perhaps was not worth minding, I will proceed to notice the remarks of the Reviewer.

The first thing that claims our attention is the remark about the saying of the Epicurean Philosopher. It appears the following expression occurs in the Tract, viz: "The knowledge of sin, said an Epicurean Philosopher, is the beginning of safety." The Reviewer considers it objectionable in the Doctor to quote from the Epicurean, and thinks it must be offensive to pious people in general. "I am persuaded," says he, "that most serious persons, under a due feeling of reverence for the word of God, would be grieved to see the manner in which a sentiment from a heathen is introduced and confirmed." Not having any very intimate acquaintance with the Epicurean Philosophy, I would not wish to be understood as defending the opinions and dogmas of that sect. Still, however, if a sentiment be correct in itself, I cannot see how it can be any thing the worse for having been repeated by an Epicurean Philosopher. It may indeed be, as is conjectured by the Reviewer, that some serious persons may be grieved at seeing the sentiment of an Epicurean "introduced and confirmed," but surely their grief will be entirely without reason. And I am inclined to think that a much greater number of serious persons will be glad to find that even a heathen was right in some things, although he might be wrong in too many of his opinions. If, therefore, the sentiment be correct in itself, I have no doubt the Doctor was quite right in introducing and confirming it; and I have as little doubt that most serious persons will be very well pleased to see it, for it is reasona-

ble to think that serious persons would rather find another person to have been right than wrong, even if he should happen to be an Epicurean Philosopher.

Moreover, besides the reasonableness of the thing, the Doctor is in this case kept in countenance by the example of the apostle Paul. When he disputed with the Epicureans and Stoics at Athens, he repeated certain sayings of their own poets, who had taught the same doctrine that he was inculcating. (Acts xvii: 28.) In this passage it has been thought he might refer to Arratus, or to Homer, or Hesiod, all of whom had advanced the same sentiment. Now I have never understood that "serious persons, under a due feeling of reverence for the word of God," have been "grieved" because the apostle Paul introduced and confirmed a sentiment that had been held by some heathens. And if they are not grieved at the apostle, why should they be grieved at Dr. Bullions? For in this case it appears to be impossible to blame the Doctor without censuring the apostle, for they both quoted from heathens.

Having shewn that the Doctor is, in this instance, fully sustained by apostolic authority, which it is hoped will not be called in question, we may now consider the quotation itself, viz: "The knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety." This the Reviewer admits "may be understood in a sound sense." And the question very naturally arises, Why did he not then understand it in "a sound sense," and so let it rest? One would have thought this would have been satisfactory to most *candid, not to say serious* persons. But not so to our critic. He no sooner asserts that the expression will admit of an interpretation that is sound and harmless, than he attempts to put such a construction upon it as will render it "erroneous" and "dangerous." This is the more inexcusable from the consideration that the sense, in which it is used by the Doctor, is limited and defined, both by the general character of the Tract and by the immediate context. It is distinctly stated in the Tract, that in evangelical repentance, there is an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, through the instrumentality of faith. And it is said to be a canon of criticism, as I think it is a law of common sense, that any expression in a work that may be thought doubtful, ought to be understood in the sense most consistent with the general principles laid down by the author. According to this rule, the knowledge of sin will appear to be the beginning of safety, in no other way than it discovers to the sinner his guilt and danger, that he may be led to the Lord Jesus Christ for safety. It is in this way that the law, by which is the knowledge of sin, is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

This interpretation is sanctioned by the context. For it is immediately added, "some are so ignorant of the law of God, that they know not when they keep or violate it." But the knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety, because by this knowledge we discover our danger, which is essential to our safety, inasmuch as a sinner, without the knowledge of his sin, cannot be persuaded that he needs a saviour. It thus appears that the expression in question, as used by the author of the Tract, merely asserts that the knowledge of sin is essential to safety, and with this the application of redemption begins, according to the well established doctrine of the Catechism. "Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit, whereby convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel."

But the Reviewer contends "that the expression of the Epicurean, as it there stands, is susceptible of an erroneous meaning." This reminds me of a certain traveller, who enquired the way to a particular place he meant to visit, and who, after he was shown the way, still asked his di-

rector, But can I not get off the road ! To be sure you can, was the reply. But what would you do off the road ! So our critic is not content with an expression that admits of a "sound sense." To please him, it must not even be "susceptible of an erroneous meaning." But this is too much to be expected from fallible and erring man, as his own writings abundantly prove. They are indeed but too "susceptible of an erroneous meaning." To say nothing about the penitent being, safely anchored on a rock, (which may indeed be a most *critical figure* of speech, but it is certainly contrary to the common usages of language, and no doubt it would incur the censure of Captain Hall, who maintains that ships should always be kept as far as possible from rocks, especially in a stormy season,) will not the expression in page 362, viz : "The scripture plainly assures the sinner, that there is no safety for him, while he is under sentence of condemnation," admit of "an erroneous meaning ?" Some severe critic, from this expression of our Reviewer, might think him unsound on the cardinal doctrine of election. For if it be admitted that God, from all eternity, elected some to everlasting life, surely there never could be a time when it could be truly said, there was no safety for any of the elect. For their safety is made to depend exclusively on the good pleasure of God, and he hath appointed them to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ. The apostle says, (Rom. v : 8,) "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." How then can it even be truly said, there is no safety for elect sinners.

Again it is stated in the same page, that "there is a knowledge of sin, which so far from "being the beginning of safety," "directly hurls into the vortex of despair." Is this expression not also susceptible of an erroneous meaning ? If we were to follow the example of the Reviewer, we must understand him as teaching that legal repentance necessarily issues in despair, because some individuals under law terrors have committed suicide. But surely this would be a very erroneous doctrine, and if generally reduced to practice, would be a very dangerous, as well as fatal doctrine. But I have no disposition to put any such interpretation on the language of the Reviewer. On the contrary, I am willing to understand them in the very soundest sense of which they are susceptible. And I have written these few lines with the charitable intention of persuading him to put the same sort of construction on the language of his neighbor, of which his own stands so much in need.

I had intended to make some observations on the following part of this review, but it is all so much of a piece with that which has been the subject of the foregoing remarks, that they may be briefly despatched.

I can see no objection to the phrase, "as true as gospel," if it be conceded that the gospel is true, and provided it be spoken seriously. It is objected that it is unsavoury to the people of God, because it may have been used by the profane and irreligious : but if we are to refrain from using all the expressions that have been misused by the profane and impious, we might abandon to their sole and separate use, the greater part of the terms in use among theologians. At this rate divine truth itself might be reckoned unsavoury.

I pass without remark, the witticism about the arsenic, as containing but little humour, and because I have no inclination to handle poison without necessity.

I admit that the Doctor, in giving an account of what Christ, as Mediator, has done, has not said all that he might have said on the head of his priestly office. But, as this is the first time I ever heard of Dr. B.'s saying too little on any subject, I think he may well be excused for this time, if it were no more than for the singularity of the thing.

It is said in the Tract, that "in adults, legal repentance is properly the

precursor and preparation for evangelical repentance." And again:—"Legal repentance may, and generally, if not uniformly, does precede faith." There is nothing at all erroneous in these expressions. But the Reviewer has treated them just in the same way that he treated the saying of the poor Epicurean. Though they will admit of a "sound sense," he tries to make them erroneous and dangerous, by a forced construction. Because Dr. B. has said legal repentance may, and generally, if not uniformly, does precede faith, the Reviewer represents him as having said that there is a necessary connexion between legal repentance and faith, so that whoever has experienced legal repentance, will of necessity become a partaker of saving faith. But Dr. B. has said no such thing. Neither will his language admit of any such construction. All that can be legitimately infered from it, is, that in the case of adults, the subjects of saving faith have generally been convinced of sin by the law, and that in the hand of the Spirit, it was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ. But it does not follow that all who are the subjects of legal repentance will necessarily believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. The very utmost that can be made of these expressions, is, that many who experience the workings of legal repentance, at length find rest in Christ. It would be quite as unfair to infer from the Doctor's language, that all the subjects of legal repentance believe unto salvation, as it would be to infer from the language of the Reviewer, that all the subjects of legal repentance must necessarily follow the example of Judas, who went and hanged himself.

It is said in the Tract, that "it is a sight by faith of Christ, as crucified, and of God, as reconciled, that produces that kindly sorrow which true penitents feel, and which brings them to Christ." In remarking on this sentence, the Reviewer refers "to the grammatical rule that would," as he says, "require the last *which* in the sentence, to refer to the same word to which the following *which* does;" viz: Kindly sorrow; and on this singular construction he founds the erroneous doctrine, that it is repentance that brings sinners to Christ. A sentiment which he says he does not believe Dr. B. entertains.

In this last expressed article of his belief, I have no doubt the Reviewer is perfectly correct. But it is to be regretted, that he has not thought fit to trouble the reader with the grammatical rule, that requires his construction of the sentence. I have a curiosity to see it, as I have an idea that it must be a newly invented one. According to the rule hitherto in use, it appears that when "several relative clauses follow one another, and have a similar dependance in respect to the antecedent, the same pronoun must be employed in each." According to this rule, perhaps the word *which* ought to have been repeated three times in the above sentence, had not the Doctor, from regard to elegance of diction, in one instance, used *that* instead of *which*, which grammarians say may be done occasionally, to avoid the too frequent repetition of the same word. But this does not alter the meaning of the sentence. The doctrine taught is precisely the same, whether it be allowed to stand as it is, or *which* be substituted for *that*. It indeed teaches very clearly, that it is a sight by faith of Christ crucified, and God reconciled, that produces true repentance, and brings the sinner to Christ. I need scarcely add, that I would like very well to see the Reviewer trouble the reader with the grammatical rule that would require the last *which* in the sentence, to refer to the same word to which the preceding *which* does.

The last article on which the Reviewer remarks, is treated much in the same way with those already noticed, and therefore need not detain us long. Under the head, "Motives to Repentance," among other things, it is said, "Till we repent, we remain under God's sentence of



condemnation, and must perish." From this and some other expressions of a like nature, the Reviewer attempts to represent Dr. B as teaching, that repentance is the condition of our justification before God, to the exclusion of the righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to us." And he adds with less charity than in a former instance, that they "would almost induce the belief that Dr. B. had, by some unaccountable oversight, actually fallen into the sentiment."

I pass the distressing casualty of Dr. Bullion's having "fallen into a sentiment," without observation, because, although it may be an error in rhetoric, it may be harmless in divinity. But the construction which the Reviewer puts upon the Doctor's language, is of the most injurious tendency, and ought to be exposed. Dr B. had previously stated, that it is a sight by faith of Christ as crucified, and of God as reconciled, which produces true repentance, and also that repentance precedes not, but follows faith. After this, he proceeds to show the necessity of repentance, and that it is essential to salvation. In discussing this subject, he uses the following expressions, viz: "Till we repent, we remain under God's sentence of condemnation, and must perish." "Life and death are suspended on repentance." "Remaining impenitent, we are condemned; repenting, our sins are blotted out, and we ourselves are saved." Here candor requires us to admit that other expressions might have been used to advantage; still, if these be considered in their connexion, they cannot be otherwise understood than, as strongly asserting the absolute necessity of repentance, and that without repentance, there can be no salvation. This is, I think, sufficiently evident, from its being stated in the Tract, that there is a looking to Christ by the eye of faith, previous to mourning for sin," and also from a reference to the words of our Lord—"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Now this is precisely the doctrine of the Catechism. It teaches that "To escape the wrath and curse of God, due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life," &c.

I cannot see what objection the Reviewer can have to this doctrine, unless he means to say that sinners can be saved without repentance. To use his own phrase, one would be led to believe he has "fallen into this sentiment," from his endeavoring to shew there is a difference between the words "except," and "till," which he accuses the Doctor with having overlooked, and he refers us to several commentators on the place, and to Scott among others. I had the curiosity to look into Scott, and had the satisfaction to observe that he asserts the necessity of repentance much in the same way with Dr. B. For he considers the text "applicable to the case of sinners in general, who must either repent or perish miserably by the just judgment of God upon them." And indeed it ought not to be viewed in any other light, than an intimation to the sinners to whom it was first addressed, as well as to all others who might hear it, that if they persisted in impenitence, they will surely perish. This is exactly what the Doctor says; but it is by no means satisfactory to his Reviewer, which would induce the belief, that in his opinion, sinners may be saved without repentance.

The general tenor of the Reviewer's remarks on this subject would also lead to the same conclusion. The Doctor had stated that the impenitent cannot find admission into heaven. With this his Reviewer is by no means satisfied; and it is difficult to see what objection he can have to it, unless he think that they can. In the course of his reasoning, he takes occasion to state, that justification and pardon, and admission into heaven, are the same thing. "Pardon of sin," says he, "and admission into heaven, or acceptance with God, is justification." But this statement is so manifestly erroneous, that it scarcely needs to be refuted. For were it

true, it would at once exclude from the benefits of justification, all the saints on earth, who are living by faith. And this would be contrary to the express words of Christ, (John iii : 36.) "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life."

The Reviewer further asks, "Can the sinner not lay hold on Christ, as set before him in the gospel offer, until he has found his heart weaned from sin." Now it is a blessed truth, that Christ is freely offered in the gospel to the chief of sinners, who are invited to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they shall be saved. Yet there can be no cordial reception of Christ by faith while the heart remains hard and impenitent. For although faith be the alone instrument of justification, "yet," says the Confession of Faith, "is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces." Faith and repentance are indeed different graces, and are distinct subjects of thought and discourse, and we are in the habit of speaking of faith as preceding repentance, nevertheless no one can be made a partaker of saving faith without experiencing repentance. Repentance is a saving grace as well as faith. Both of them are essential to salvation. Hence it is said in the Confession of Faith, that repentance is "of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it." Surely then Dr. B. ought not to be blamed for saying that the impenitent cannot find admission into heaven without repentance.

It is singular, that the very text quoted by the Reviewer on this subject, confirms the statement of Dr. B. It is Matt. ix : 13. "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." This proves that the way in which Christ saves his people, is not by allowing them to continue in the love of sin, but by bringing them to repentance. I would have been willing to have dwelt at some length on this subject, were it not that these observations have been drawn out to too great length already. I shall therefore conclude, with the single remark, that my object is not so much to expose the errors of this critic, as to extract the sting from the tail of his criticism, and to wipe away the reproach of heresy, undeservedly cast on a Reverend Divine, who appears to me to be sufficiently orthodox. A.

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#### ART. IV. *To Correspondents.*

To prevent mistakes, or inferences, which might prove injurious to the circulation and usefulness of the Monitor, it is incumbent on us to explain more fully the principles by which we endeavor to be governed in relation to articles offered for insertion in our pages.

At an early period of our progress it was announced that original communications, from any of the Ministers of the Associate Church, would be inserted. This was done with a view to obtain a respectable quantity of new matter. But we never intended by this license, to deprive either ourselves or others of the privilege of candid and fair criticism on any thing that might appear; nor do we suppose that any have so understood the matter. But in matters not really important, it has been judged most judicious to let them pass without comment, lest we should appear to be impertinent, if not invidious. We allude to such things as obscurity of meaning, peculiar modes of expression, inconclusive reasoning, and sometimes inaccuracy of sentiment, which are occasionally found in a great majority of writers. Therefore we desire not to be held responsible for

every expression found in the writings of correspondents, the responsibility resting upon the writers themselves. Such as would apply this rule to the conductors of a periodical, would, if placed in like circumstances, soon discover its injustice. If the general tendency of the work be to vindicate truth, and if nothing should find its way into its pages calculated to unsettle the minds of the people as to any article of their public profession, it is about as much as should be required.

Keeping these principles as nearly in view as possible, as being the best we could adopt, many *expressions* have passed without remark, with which we could not agree, believing that any note or comment, which we might make, would increase rather than diminish the evil, especially in cases where the writer's name was appended, or (which is much the same thing,) where it was generally known. On this principle, some remarks respecting prayer, page 330, and the "*Tract on Repentance*," were admitted without comment.

On the principles explained above, many *articles* have also been admitted, the seasonableness, or expediency of which, might at least be questioned. It was so in relation to the controversy respecting "*the previous publication of the purpose of marriage*," and one of the writers then claimed to be heard, on this very ground.\* It was so in relation to the Review of the Tract; and is so now in relation to the "Observations" of A. on that Review, which will be found in the present number. It is true, the introduction of the Review purports, to leave the decision to us respecting its insertion; but it was well known that it would have given offence to have rejected it; and under all the circumstances, however much its expediency may have been doubted, it could not well be refused without claiming for the writer of the Tract exemption from criticism, which it is presumed no writer desires.

After much deliberation, we have come to the determination, so far to depart from our ordinary rule respecting the admission of articles designed for our pages, as to admit nothing further, (unless, indeed, something should be offered especially tending to the defence of the truth and the edification of readers,) respecting either the "*Tract*," the "*Review*," or the "Observations" on that Review, for the following reasons:

1. The name of the author of the Tract having been appended to it, the minds of some appear to have been diverted wholly from the Tract to the author. 2. The Reviewer appeared to labor under disadvantage in his article from a fear that this would be the case. 3. The writer of the Remarks on the review, evidently founds his production on the supposition that the Reviewer aimed rather at the author of the Tract than at the Tract itself, which is evident to us from the poetical quotation heading his article, and from other things contained in it. 4. It is evident if the first three reasons be well taken, that no additional light will be shed upon the doctrine of Repentance, by allowing a discussion of this kind to go on. These reasons are satisfactory to us, and we hope will be so to our readers.

In coming to this determination, we have seen the necessity, and felt the force of the Apostle's declaration, that he knew "*no man after the flesh*;" and have imposed a necessity upon ourselves of noticing some things in the Tract, the Review, and the Observations on the Review, lest the reader should be left in doubt respecting some plain things, concerning which there should be no doubt.

As the doctrine of repentance is so plainly laid down in our Standards, and in a number of excellent Catechisms in general circulation, and is so frequently insisted upon from the pulpit, and is so highly practical in its

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\*See Vol. ix. page 222.

nature, that all our members probably possess a tolerable knowledge of this doctrine, and all have the means at hand for possessing a thorough knowledge of it, it would be unseasonable to say any thing directly respecting it at present. Hence we shall barely attempt to rescue a few plain points from that obscurity in which they have been involved, by a few brief animadversions upon such passages in each of the above mentioned articles, in the order in which they were published, as appear to us either to obscure the truth, or the sentiments of the writers commented upon.

According to this arrangement, we commence with the Tract. At page 208 we find the following expressions: "The knowledge of sin, said an Epicurean philosopher, is the beginning of safety. This is true as gospel, and proved by this, that while all are sinners, there are few penitents."

The first sentence, without some qualifying phrase, is, in our opinion, untrue; and the proof adduced in the second sentence makes it still worse, unless we take from it all meaning;\* for it supposes "the knowledge of sin" to be the efficient cause of repentance; else why is ignorance in the very next sentence said to be "*the true and sufficient cause*" of impenitence? Let us see what this doctrine will prove.

The knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety. The devils possess the knowledge of sin.† Therefore, the devils have begun to be safe. But lest any should cavil against this reasoning because the devils are not under a dispensation of grace, we will change the terms. Rom. i: 18, it is declared, that "the wrath of God is revealed against all who *hold the truth* in unrighteousness," and holding the truth, certainly implies knowledge of sin. it will then stand thus: The knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety. They that hold the truth in unrighteousness, have the knowledge of sin. Therefore, such as hold the truth in unrighteousness have begun to be safe. Thus we may see where this doctrine would lead us; from which we conclude that this saying of the Epicurian philosopher, said to be "true as gospel," is not so.

But let us not do the author of the Tract injustice; he had laid down a position, as containing the first ingredient in repentance, in these words: "Correct apprehensions of the abominable nature and fearful consequences of sin, and also of God's gracious character as the just God and the Saviour;" and had just entered upon the proof and illustration of this position, when the saying of the Epicurian occurs; and had he simply asserted, that "the knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety," and left the Epicurian to his long and undisturbed repose, the expression we think would naturally have been qualified by the proposition under discussion, and we have no doubt was intended to be so qualified; and so the Reviewer and A., and our humble selves might have saved our time, paper and ink; and what is of vastly greater consequence, our readers might have been saved the trouble of wading through so many pages of unprofitable and unedifying matter. For it will scarcely be maintained that the knowledge of sin, spoken of by the Epicurean, was saving knowledge; and this circumstance naturally leads the mind of the reader to suppose, that the author of the Tract spoke of the same kind of knowledge of sin, that the Epicurean intended.

From the view we have taken of this subject, it will be observed, that

\* We say, *unless we take from it all meaning*; for we are not quite sure, that it has any. We tried it several different ways, and the best proposition we could make of it, is, "the knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety," because, *while all are sinners, there are few penitents*. Now we are utterly at a loss to discover any connection between the premise and conclusion, if the conclusion be not predicated on the assumption, that the knowledge of sin is the efficient cause of repentance.

† They are said to "believe and tremble;" this certainly implies knowledge of sin.



we do not see the force of A.'s apology for the introduction of the Epi-curean, drawn from Acts xvii: 28; because the saying quoted by the Apostle is taught by the light of nature; but not so in regard to the saying quoted by the author of the Tract, taken in an evangelical sense; and because the Apostle was writing under the direction of inspiration, and *knew* what was true; the author of the Tract was not, and therefore was not authorized to say of any human expression it "is true as gospel;" especially, unless its counterpart could be found in the scriptures, which appears not to be the case in this instance. And furthermore, it cannot be said of any other writings, than the scriptures, *taken as a whole*, that they are "true as gospel;" and hence to say this of a single sentence, carries in it an air of irreverence towards divine revelation. But let this matter pass, which perhaps has already been dwelt upon too long.

It would be an useless repetition, to dwell any longer particularly on the Tract, or the Review, as we should in general repeat the sentiments of the Reviewer; for we have not been able to discover any thing in his remarks materially uncandid or unfair; nor any thing inaccurate, excepting the declaration, that "Pardon of sin, admission into heaven, or acceptance with God is justification." The words "admission into heaven," should have been omitted, unless the writer intended to refer to the open justification of all the people of God at the last day, which is not probable, as such a reference was not called for in that place, and would have been in bad taste. But as A. has clearly pointed out this mistake, we shall pass on to a brief notice of some things contained in his observations.

It appears from the quotation heading A.'s observations, that he supposed the Reviewer was influenced by bitterness towards the author of the Tract. Of this we see no evidence; but the contrary appears to us upon the face of the Review. This however is a matter of opinion, concerning which every reader will form his own conclusion.

The remarks in the first paragraph, respecting the duty of a critic, have a more immediate respect to literary beauties and defects; but the Reviewer professed to comment upon the *theology*, not the *literature* of the Tract.

As the Reviewer admits, that the saying, "the knowledge of sin is the beginning of safety," "may be understood in a sound sense," A. asks, "Why did he not then understand it 'in a sound sense,' and so let it rest?" To this question it may be replied, that it is not always safe to let things rest, which *may* be understood in a sound sense; because in such cases, in nine times out of ten, the ordinary reader will take the unsound sense; and because the teachers of error almost invariably introduce their sentiments by using erroneous expressions which *may* be understood in a sound sense. This is abundantly attested by the experience of the church in every age; especially is this true in relation to phrases like that noticed by the Reviewer, page 363, respecting what Christ has done in his priestly office, in which only a part of the truth is asserted; and that part would shelter under it the most pernicious errors, extensively prevalent in our day.

A. seems to suppose that the expression of the Reviewer, page 362, that "the scripture plainly assures the sinner that there is no safety for him while he is under sentence of condemnation," may admit of the same kind of criticism, as that which the Reviewer has applied to some expressions of the Tract, as implying an objection against the doctrine of election.<sup>1</sup> We think this expression admits of no such criticism; because it is in all respects true. So far from this declaration implying an objection against the doctrine of election in any sense, that doctrine confirms the declaration; for the very purpose of election is to bring the sinner out from

"under sentence of condemnation." The golden and indissoluble chain, is, "whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also JUSTIFIED; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii : 30.) Therefore, the safety of the elect sinner lies wholly in the infallible certainty that he *shall be justified*. Much more might be said on this point, but we think it must be manifest to the weakest capacity, that this saying differs widely from the declaration, that "there is no safety for elect sinners."

Again: we are unable to see that any "dangerous," or "fatal doctrine," can be inferred from the expression, taken in its utmost latitude—"that there is a knowledge of sin, which so far from being the beginning of safety, directly hurls into the vortex of despair." According to the commonly received definition of legal repentance, among sound divines, it is that which flows from a dread of *God's wrath*, and in which the sinner is mostly taken up with the *fatal consequences* of sin. If this would not hurl the sinner "into the vortex of despair," in the same proportion as it is experienced, we cannot even conceive what would do so. To say that legal repentance may, or if you please, that it *uniformly* does precede evangelical repentance, is quite different from the saying that legal repentance is the *preparation* for evangelical repentance. For a state of *condemnation* uniformly precedes a state of *justification*. But to say that the former is a preparation for the latter, would be to say that, the longer a sinner continues in his wickedness, so much the more *prepared* is he for being righteous. So, to say that legal repentance, which is neither a grace, nor a duty, but a sin, is a preparation for evangelical repentance, which is both a grace and a duty, is to say that sin is a preparation for graces and duties, which is absurd.

As A. has adverted to rules of criticism, it is supposed that we may be permitted the same privilege. We have somewhere read something like the following: "Never to look for more from an author than he professedly or impliedly intended to give." It is believed that a recurrence to this rule would have saved a serious illustration of a serious subject, from the appellation—"the witticism about the arsenic;" and from being passed over as containing "little humor."

The controversy between the Reviewer and A. respecting the construction of the relative pronoun, "which," not coming within the scope of our publication, and not being very important, we pass it over, and recommend the parties to some literary work, for a settlement of that question.

We think the expressions,—"*till we repent we remain under sentence of condemnation*"—"till the heart is weaned from sin, it cannot accept of the grace of the gospel"—and "*life and death are suspended on repentance*," which A. at least palliates, can neither be taken in a sound sense, nor successfully vindicated.

The *first* cannot be true; because union to Christ, faith and justification, all, in the order of nature, precede repentance; and justification is a simple *instantaneous* act of God, in which the sentence of condemnation is removed; but repentance as exercised by the penitent, and this is that of which the writer of the Tract was speaking, is a complex and *continuous* act. Hence it follows conclusively that this saying cannot be true; for as we have seen, its opposite is true, to wit: *till we are justified, we remain impenitent*.

The *second* cannot be true, as the Reviewer has shown, page 366, and as is shown in the third particular of the note to page 367, to which the reader is referred. But we may add, that it is conceded, that a weaning of the heart from sin *commences* when faith begins to be acted; yet this does not help the expression, because faith is the first in the order of na

ture, and accepting the grace of the gospel is an act of faith. Therefore, if we retain the phraseology of the expression, its opposite will be found true, to wit: "*till the heart accept the grace of the gospel, it cannot be weaned from sin.*" And to this correspond the words of Christ: "Without (*separate from*) me, ye can do nothing." Moreover, it may be observed that this saying carries its own condemnation on its front; for if the heart be weaned from sin it has no necessity for accepting either of Christ, or the grace of the gospel; and it would be as inconsistent for it to accept the grace of the gospel, as it would for the angels in heaven to do so.

This is a point of the highest moment, and we are reluctant to dismiss it. It was one of the main grounds of the controversy between the fathers of the Secession and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. And if any one doctrine, more than another, has distinguished the Secession Church from other denominations, it has been the untrammelled offer of the gospel to all within its sound; neither restricting it to the sensible, nor the penitent sinner, but exhorting all, "the stout-hearted, and far from righteousness," the vile and the unbelieving, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and commanding them by his authority to receive him and his righteousness by faith, for justification, repentance, sanctification, and at last the enjoyment of God in heaven. And it is this that gives the deepest die of malignity to the rejection of the gospel offer, and aggravates the condemnation of gospel despisers to a degree, that the scenes of eternity alone can fathom. But if this saying were true, the despisers of the gospel would remain on a level with the heathen as to the degree of their guilt, and the declaration of our Lord (Luke x: 14.) would no longer be true, that "it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sydon at the judgment" than for those cities, which received not his apostles and disciples.\*

\* The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, that met in 1717, condemn, in the strongest terms, the following proposition advanced by the Presbytery of Auchterarder, viz:

"That it is not sound and orthodox to teach 'that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God,' for, the General Assembly 'declare their abhorrence of the aforesaid proposition, as unsound and most detestable.'"

On this deed of the Assembly, the *Associate Presbytery*, in their "Act concerning the Doctrine of Grace," speak as follows:

"Now, if this proposition is to be abhorred as unsound and most detestable, namely, that it is not sound and orthodox to teach, that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, and instating us in covenant with God; then, according to that act of Assembly, it would be sound doctrine to teach, That a sinner must forsake his sin in order to his coming to Christ, or, which is the same thing, That it is a man's duty to forsake his sin, in order to his coming to Christ; but this is evidently contrary to scripture: For,

1. Although it is the unquestionable duty of the creature to forsake and abandon whatever is forbidden by the law of his Creator: yet, since life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel, the law binds to the observation of that order and connexion of duties, which is laid out in the word of grace; and it is plain that the first and leading duty, required in the law, upon the revelation of the grace of God in the promise of the gospel, is, 'to believe that report; for without faith it is impossible to please God.' (Heb. xi: 6.) 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.' (John iii: 36.) Hence it follows, that according to scripture, every act of the soul, as performed by a person before saving faith or coming to Christ, is sin; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin, and therefore cannot be a forsaking of sin.

2. As the above act of Assembly is contrary to the scripture order and connexion of duties, so likewise it is contrary to that order of gracious operation held forth in scripture; for our forsaking of sin (being a branch of true repentance, importing the purification of the heart, and the exercise of love, which is the fulfilling of the law) is in scripture expressly declared to be a fruit of faith, which faith is the soul's coming to Christ; and consequently to maintain, that we must forsake sin in order to our coming to Christ, is as much as to say, we must have repentance, purity of heart, and love, in order to our believing in Christ; whereas, on the contrary, the Lord hath declared in his word, that faith worketh by love; that he purifies the heart of his people by faith, and has promised, that they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him. According to the Assembly's doctrine, our forsaking of sin, which is the removal of the soul's disease, must be at least commenced or begun, in order to our coming to him who is the physician; and that we must repent of our sin in order to our

Finally: If the first two sayings cannot be maintained, the *third* falls to the ground of necessity. But it may be observed on this saying, that "life and death are suspended on repentance;" that when one thing is said to be suspended on another, it supposes the thing on which it is suspended, to be either the *efficient* or *procuring* cause of that thing. To illustrate this—A. contracts with B. to perform a certain service, and B. promises a certain reward, on the performance of that service. Here the reward is suspended on the performance of the stipulated service; and the service being performed, and the promise having been made good, B. is the *efficient* cause, and A.'s service the *procuring* cause of the reward. So, if "life and death be suspended on repentance," then repentance is the *procuring* cause of life, which is not true. Moreover, repentance, as it is exercised by the penitent, is a good work, and we think it would startle A. himself to hear the doctrine taught, that life and death are suspended upon good works. Nor will it help the matter, but make it worse, to say that the author of the Tract was urging motives to re-

coming to him, who is exalted to give repentance as well as forgiveness of sins: whereas the Spirit of God, in scripture, has declared that God having raised up his Son Jesus, hath sent him to bless us, in turning away every one of us from his iniquities: and that sinners are called and invited to look and come to Christ for salvation, both from sin and wrath, and this without regard unto any previous qualifications in them. This coming is indeed inconsistent with a resolution to go on in sin: yet it is plain that no sinner can wash himself before he come to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness: whereas the Assembly have inverted this order, and have said upon the matter, that we must be holy, or so and so qualified, in order to our coming to Christ, or having a vital union with him; which is the very soul of Neonomian and Arminian doctrine. According to scripture, all gracious actings of the soul, whereof the forsaking of sin is an eminent one, flow from that virtue and influence, which is derived from Christ the true vine, and that in a way of faith's union with him; since without him, or separate from him, we can do nothing; and therefore it is vain to pretend to any gracious, evangelical or acceptable act, but by virtue of grace and strength derived from Christ, or until the soul come to Christ, and be united to him, as the living root, and fountain of all gracious influence.

3. As forsaking of sin is no small part of conversion, so the above act of Assembly evidently tends to exalt man's natural powers, and his own ability to convert himself, or prepare himself thereunto; and thus it greatly favors the Pelagian doctrine on this head, expressly contrary to scripture, which declares, that naturally we are dead in trespasses and sins; without strength, yea, that our mind is enmity against God.

"Wherefore the Presbytery did, and hereby do, upon the grounds and reasons above mentioned, condemn the following propositions, as unsound doctrine. 1. That (notwithstanding the aforesaid gospel order and connection of duties) mankind sinners must forsake their sins, in order to their coming to Christ, and being instated in covenant with God. 2. That a natural man can of himself forsake his sin; or, that he can receive any strength from Christ, to enable him to forsake sin in a spiritual and evangelical manner, until by the power of the Spirit of Christ working faith in him, he come to Christ, is united to him, and thus created in Christ Jesus unto good works. 3. That any good or commendable qualifications are required or expected of sinners, in the gospel call or offer, in order to their coming to Christ, and being instated in covenant with God. All which propositions are contrary to the doctrines held forth from the holy scriptures in our Confession of Faith, chap. ix: § 3. "Man by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto." And Chap. xiv: § 1. where the principal acts of saving faith are said to be, "accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for—sanctification," whereof forsaking sin is a branch.

"And the Presbytery acknowledge, assert and declare, that it is the duty of all, upon the revelation of Christ in the gospel, and without looking for any previous qualifications in themselves, instantly to believe in him for salvation, both from sin and wrath; and that, in so doing only, they will be made, in a gospel manner, to mourn for sin, forsake it, and live unto righteousness; so that it is not possible for any man, of himself, to forsake his sins, nor is it inconsistent with the divine method of grace held forth in the gospel, that a sinner should receive strength and grace to forsake his sins, or actually to exercise gospel repentance, until he is determined and enabled by the power of the Spirit of faith, to look or come to Christ, the Prince and Saviour exalted to give repentance and forgiveness of sins.

"Therefore upon the grounds and reasons aforesaid, the Presbytery exhort and warn all under their inspection to be aware of every doctrine that has a tendency to pervert the gospel order in the manner above condemned; or to exalt corrupt nature unto ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: as the above doctrine, of forsaking our sin in order to our coming to Christ, manifestly doth; in regard a natural man can no more forsake his sin, or qualify himself for the grace of God, than the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots, according to the doctrine contained in the aforesaid passages of our Confession, and in our Larger Catechism, Q. 32."



penitance; for while its *necessity* may be urged as a motive, yet to urge as a motive, that life and death are suspended upon it, appears to us to be the very essence of *legalism*.

This doctrine makes nothing against the *necessity* of repentance, as A. seems to suppose; for repentance is necessary, as it is inseparably connected with, and is in fact a part of salvation. The necessity of repentance, is the doctrine taught (Luke xiii: 3, 5,) without any reference to its peculiar offices, or the place it occupies in the scheme of salvation.\* And in order to derive the least countenance from this text in support of the first expression animadverted upon, it would be necessary to render *ἕως μὴ*, *till*, while their uniform renderings are *except, unless, if not*.† Besides, while the rendering of *ἕως μὴ* by the word *till*, would not help this expression, it would make the text declare, that sinners *perish till* they repent, whereas they do not perish till all opportunity for repentance is removed.

Therefore, if we be not altogether in the dark, it will be seen that it required no very great stretch of candor in A. to admit "*that other expressions might have been used to advantage*"! It is however to be regretted that the author of the Tract had not himself, instead of his friend A., responded to the Reviewer; for it is matter of deep interest to the church to know whether he really maintains these sentiments or not.

But in order to remove all doubts respecting the candor of A.'s observations, we beg leave to refer the reader to page 48, where all must agree with him, that the writer of the Tract "ought not to be blamed for saying that the impenitent cannot find admission into heaven without repentance." Had the Reviewer blamed him for a sentiment like this, he would have condemned the truth, and exposed himself to merited rebuke. And had any thing like this appeared in the Review, it would have justified the charge of unfairness implied against him by the whole tenor of A.'s observations.

In conclusion, A. says: "My object is not so much to expose the errors of this critic, as to extract the sting from the tail of his criticism, and to wipe away the reproach of heresy undeservedly cast on a Reverend Divine, who appears to me to be sufficiently orthodox." Here, it is believed, lies the whole difficulty of this affair. The Tract must be swallowed, right or wrong, and the Reviewer condemned, because "a Reverend Divine" stands in the way. To this circumstance we ascribe all those things in the observations of A., which we have seen it a duty to notice, seeing that few men possess all those qualifications requisite to constitute a fine writer, in a greater degree than A., and that he has the faculty of diffusing an interest into his productions, which secures for them a reading, even in cases where his sentiments are not received. For we hold that the object of every writer should be not so much to reproach any human

\*The text in Luke xiii: 3. does not hold forth a connection between repentance and pardon, but only between not repenting and perishing. There is a great difference between these two connections. Let the argument be this: *Except ye repent, ye shall perish*. Therefore, if ye do repent, ye shall live. Here, as Mr. Boston observes, "the consequent is true, but the consequence is naught." It is no better reasoning than it would be to say, Because he who does not pray, shall perish: therefore he, who prays, shall be saved. To this purpose is Calvin's answer to the Papists, when they allege, that men must be justified by their good works, because they are condemned for the want of them. Calvin's Institutions, Book iii. Chap. xviii. sect. 10. The contraries here, says Mr. Calvin, are not equal: for one deviation, however small, from the pure and perfect rule of God's law, renders a person unrighteous and liable to eternal death. (Jam. ii. 10.) But it is not one nor a few good works, but an unremitted course of obedience, without any the least defect, that will constitute a person righteous in the sight of God. And it is a maxim with regard to a particular action, That it is not morally good, unless it has all the requisites of a good work: the want of one of them renders it evil.—Dr. Anderson.

† See Parkhurst, Screvillius, and Donnegan's Lexicons.

being; nor yet so much to "wipe away" reproach, deservedly or "undeservedly" cast upon another, as to vindicate truth and "expose error."

But some one may be ready to inquire, why have we entered upon a serious argument, to disprove the truth of two or three expressions, which may have occurred inadvertently, and which the author, for aught we know, would disclaim? To such an inquiry we reply, that these expressions have been respectfully pointed out to the author, as being erroneous, and he has neither explained nor disclaimed them; but on the contrary another individual has stepped forth in their vindication, and endeavored to maintain that their author is "sufficiently orthodox," in the use of them. This not only furnished a sufficient reason for the course we have taken, but demanded it. No doubt A. has been influenced by a commendable zeal to defend a brother; but this must not be done at the expense of precious truth, even though that brother should be "a Reverend Divine." For it is a mournful truth, that the hedges about Zion have been broken down, and her land marks removed, almost uniformly by Reverend Divines. Need we refer to instances? Who was it that in our own day stabbed the Associate Reformed Church, almost to her vitals, and accomplished more towards unsettling the faith and order of the Churches of the Reformation, than the whole body of laymen in the United States? We do not ascribe any such motives or intentions to the writer of the Tract. But if the friends of that gentleman were anxious to produce such a result, they could not more effectually accomplish their purpose, than by justifying his errors, and condemning all who point them out, with a view to their correction, as being actuated by improper motives. And here it may be asked, why this ridicule and implied charge of bitterness against the Reviewer? Such things always savor of a bad cause. These are the weapons now so successfully wielded by the corrupt majority in the General Assembly. Supposing the Reviewer was actuated by the most malignant spirit, yet if the Tract be invulnerable, the friends of its author need not be troubled to search for the motives of such as praise or blame. Let the question be stripped of these extraneous matters. The expressions that have been objected to, are either true or false. If true, let that be proved; if erroneous, let that be acknowledged.

But, says an objector, the true doctrine is taught in the Tract, and, therefore, it was uncandid in the Reviewer to point out these erroneous expressions. The weight of this objection we are entirely willing to rest on a precedent which the writer of the Tract cannot object to, however much it may be objected to by his friends. In a review of Dr. Beman's Sermons on the Atonement,\* the author of that Review, after having placed a number of "mutually subversive statements," in juxtaposition, applies to them the strongest language of reprobation, such as—"We live in an age of hypocrisy, in which good names are given to bad things, and a little truth is mixed with error, that it may the more effectually and fatally deceive."

In concluding this delicate subject, it becomes us to say, that we regretted the appearance of the Tract, for we had reason to fear that it would call out an unfavorable review, if published without comment; and we knew that any comment of ours would not be well received. We knew, also, that to point out those expressions for correction, or to refuse the insertion of the Tract, would give offence, having before had some experience in this way, from the same quarter. We regretted the appearance of the Review; for we had indulged some hope, that the expressions criticised, would not have attracted particular attention,

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\*Religious Monitor, vol. ii: page 103—105.

and so would have passed off without criticism. And we regretted the appearance of A's observations still more, because, as appears to us, A., in his zeal to convict the Reviewer of an improper spirit, obscures some important truths. But since the Reviewer has clearly pointed out some erroneous expressions, they should not be vindicated even though they might cast some degree of censure upon their author; for truth is precious, and we are bound to maintain it, and cannot go back, whoever or whatever may stand in the way. It is not for us to speak of motives any farther than they are declared and obvious; it is not for us to account for unsound expressions which may be used by our correspondents; nor to say what degree of censure they merit, or whether they are censurable at all or not. But it is for us to redeem an often repeated pledge to our readers, to maintain to the utmost of our power, the doctrines of the Reformation, as these are maintained and witnessed for by the Associate Synod. And so entirely conscious are we of being influenced by no other motive than the one now mentioned, that, while we have deemed it a duty to exclude any thing further directly respecting the Tract, we not only agree to admit without any impeachment of motives, but with thankfulness, the correction of any error, into which we may have fallen, either now, or at any other time.

#### ART. V. *Proceedings of the General Assembly.*

MR. EDITOR—On the 30th of May, Mr. Jennings, of the Presbytery of Ohio, rose in his place and offered a resolution in opposition to some prevailing errors, which, being seconded, and a few remarks offered, was, on motion of Dr. Tucker, of Troy, indefinitely postponed, for the purpose of taking up the following, which was adopted with great unanimity, viz:

*Resolved*, That this Assembly cherish an unabated attachment to the system of doctrines contained in the standards of their faith, and would guard with vigilance against any departures from it: and they enjoin the careful study of it upon all the members of the Presbyterian Church, and their firm support by all Scriptural and Constitutional methods."

This was considered by many as an evasion of the question, and the recording of the ayes and nays, on the subject of the postponement, was called for; that the original motion, as made by Mr. Jennings, might thus be put on the records. But some objection being made, the call was withdrawn, with the understanding, expressed and not refused, that the minority would have leave to enter their protest.

On the 3d of June, thirty-nine members of the Assembly, over their proper signatures, offered the following

#### PROTEST.

"The undersigned would respectfully ask leave to record their solemn protest against the decision of the General Assembly, by which the following resolution was rejected, viz: *Resolved*, That this Assembly, in accordance with a previous resolution which allows this body to condemn error in the abstract; and in accordance with our form of government which gives the General Assembly the privilege of warning and bearing testimony against error in doctrine; does hereby bear solemn testimony against the following errors, whether such errors be held in or out of the Presbyterian Church, viz: 'That Adam was not the covenant head, or federal representative of his posterity—That we have nothing to do with the first sin of Adam—That it is not imputed to his posterity—That infants have no moral character—That all sin consists in voluntary acts or exercises—That man, in his fallen state, is possessed of entire ability to do whatever God requires him to do, independently of any new power or ability imparted to him by the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit—That regeneration is the act of the sinner—That Christ did not become the legal substitute and surety of sinners—That the atonement of Christ was not strictly vicarious—That the atonement is made as much for the non-elect, as for the elect.'

"We protest against the refusal to consider and act definitely upon the above resolution.

"1. Because the errors alluded to are contrary to the Scriptures and to our Confession of Faith, and are of a very pernicious tendency.

"2. Because the Assembly was informed that such errors to a great extent, pervade our land, and are constantly circulating through our church, in books, pamphlets, and periodicals.

"3. Because in the refusal to consider, and amend if necessary, and adopt the above resolution, this Assembly has, in our opinion, refused to discharge a solemn duty enjoined by the Confession of Faith, and loudly and imperiously called for by the circumstances of the church.

"David M'Kinney, James Magraw, Ashbel Green, Samuel Boyd, E. H. Snowden, Simeon H. Crane, George Morris, A. Bayless, Robert Love, H. Campbell, Alexander M'Farlane, Wm. L. Breckinridge, Isaac V. Brown, James Scott, I. N. Candee, D. R. Preston, Loyal Young, William Sickles, Wm. Wylie, Benjamin F. Spillman, James Blake, W. A. G. Posey, Cyrus Johnston, Benjamin M'Dowell, Edward Vanhorn, Wm. M'Comb, George Marshall, James M'Farren, S. M'Farren, Wm. Craig, James Remington, Jacob Green, C. Beers, Charles Woodward, J. Clark, Jacob Coen, John P. Vandyke, John W. Scott, James W. M'Kennan."

The protest being read, a motion was made that the protest be received; which, after considerable discussion, was rejected by a vote of 56 to 42. A motion was then made to record the ayes and nays, which motion was rejected by the Moderator pro tem., as not being in order. An appeal from the chair was taken, when the house sustained the chair.

Thus the General Assembly resisted every attempt to have the motion of Mr. Jennings recorded.

Against the recording of the protest it was argued—That the Constitution of the Church provides for recording the protests of a minority against acts done by the Assembly, and not against its refusal to act; that the minutes should not be burdened; that the newspapers were accessible and would circulate the protest; that it was not judicious. By some it was asserted that they believed, and should vote, if called to vote, on the subjects referred to, with those who signed the protest, but they thought an expression on these subjects at this time was not called for. One individual of high standing in the church, opposed the protest because some of the sentiments mentioned in the resolution of Mr. Jennings as errors, he believed to be truth, stated in the abstract, and he would maintain them, and was willing to answer to his Presbytery for maintaining them. He also declared, in reference to the sentiments of the resolution, "If this be heresy, I freely declare that I so worship the God of My fathers."

In favor of recording the protest, it was argued—That the rejected motion should have been put on the minutes—that when the request for the ayes and nays was withdrawn, it was on the express condition that there should be a protest entered—that the hearing of the motion, and its postponement to take up a substitute were acts of this Assembly, and as such should have been recorded, but whether recorded or not, were distinct and definite acts, subject constitutionally to protest—that the protest was brief and respectful—that those who signed it were conscientious in the discharge of this duty, and wished, if the right was doubted, that courtesy might be so extended to them—that they did not wish to use the journals of the day to circulate their protest, as it was not their design to spread their grievances before the world, and thus induce an extended controversy, but merely to send the acts and doings of the Assembly to the Churches and Presbyteries, through the more certain and less public medium of the minutes—that there were serious differences and dangerous varieties of sentiment in the Church, and that a refusal to record this protest in the minutes would be considered, by both the friends and opponents of our Confession of Faith, as an expression of this Assembly, in favor of those who speak lightly of our system of doctrines, and who do not preach in accordance with this "form of sound words"—that error always springs up in the Church, and is fostered under the protection of "free interpretation," "liberty of thought," "freedom of speech," "philosophical distinction," "the spirit of the age," "variety in modes of expression," and other popular sentiments—and that if we would oppose error, we are instructed by history, that we must follow it through all its windings, in all its various forms of expression, of interpretation, and of philosophical distinction, and must expose it in every variety it may assume.

There was manifested throughout the sessions of the Assembly, a peculiar sensitiveness when points of doctrine were approached, and the effort on the part of the majority to exclude every thing which would call forth an expression of doctrinal sentiment was unremitting. But, notwithstanding the persevering and combined effort to exclude all expressions on doctrines, still so important and vital a subject could not be entirely suppressed. On this subject there were in the Assembly evidently three classes.

The first class is comprised of those who receive and maintain the doctrines of our church, as expressed in her standards, in the obvious sense of the language, and who



are opposed to innovations in the manner of stating the fundamental truths of our religion. This class embraced about one-third of the Assembly.

The second class profess not to differ essentially from the former, but take the liberty to use language very different from that used in the Confession and Catechisms. They maintain the right of interpretation for themselves, and of expressing their sentiments in any language they may choose, however variant from the language of the Confession; and still wish to be considered in good standing: simply on their professed reception of the *system of doctrines*. One of these, at least, publicly declared that he embraced, in the abstract, some of the sentiments alluded to in the resolution on which the protest was founded. Others, less publicly, expressed similar sentiments. But, as before remarked, every thing which would bring them to a public and distinct expression of doctrinal sentiment was sedulously avoided, or quickly voted out of the house.

The third class embraces those who professed cordially to receive the doctrines as expressed in the Confession of Faith, in the obvious meaning of the language. They expressed an entire agreement in doctrine with the first class, and a dissent in doctrine from the second class. But still they were unwilling, by any resolution, protest, or other act, or matter of record, to send down to the churches any expression of opinion on existing differences in doctrine. This class professed heartily to believe with the first class, and yet they, with apparent cordiality, voted with the second class. The relative strength of those two classes could not be determined, as they almost uniformly voted together.

From this brief statement of facts, made necessary by the refusal of the Assembly to record the protest, it manfully appears.

1. That there is error in the church at least to some extent, error bold enough to brave the Assembly as well as the inferior judicatories.

2. That there is among the professedly, and it is believed, truly orthodox, a very great sympathy for those who depart, at least in language, from what has generally been held as scriptural truth in the Presbyterian church.

3. That while this sympathy with error exists, there is but little hope for the due exercise of discipline in Presbyteries; for, while the General Assembly refuses to warn the churches against error, it is not to be expected that it will sustain an inferior judicatory in its discipline of the man who publishes or preaches that error.

4. That it is high time that the friends of truth should awake, not to angry controversy, but to an enlightened and a united effort in maintaining in their purity the doctrines and order of our church. They must not shrink from duty. Zion's king would marshal the soldiers of the cross. He requires a united and untiring effort, an humble and quenchless zeal, unwavering firmness, a meek and quiet spirit, mutual forbearance, with wisdom, faith and prayer, holding fast the form of sound words which we have received of our Lord and Master, and which we have vowed to maintain as embodied in our Confession and Catechisms. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and, through God, shall prove mighty to the pulling down of strong holds. Our confidence is not in man. In Jehovah of hosts is our help.

Yours in the bonds of the Gospel,

DAVID M'KINNEY,

Philadelphia, June 4.

A Member of the Assembly.

#### ART. VI. The Presbyterian Church.

Things have now reached a painful crisis in this great church, and we are looking with the deepest interest, upon the movements of our orthodox brethren within it.

There can be no doubt that they have suffered the season to go by, when they could have taken measures to save the purity and true peace of that church. They have had many a solemn warning; and many an earnest entreaty, urging on them the necessity of employing the prompt and energetic discipline of the church to repel intruders: they have been repeatedly told that "they must cut off; or be themselves soon cut off." They had also before their eyes, the instructive example of the Synod of Ulster, in Ireland; which, a few years ago took the necessary steps to purify their church; and actually declared, by a Synodical act, *forty-five ministers*, corrupt in doctrine, to be no longer of their communion.

But these warnings and examples have been suffered to pass by unimproved, and unnoticed. Each Annual Assembly witnessed a new display of the doctrine of *EXPEDIENCY*: and the consequent sacrifice of truth and purity, to what was chosen to be called *PEACE MEASURES*! The new school men, embracing persons of the most heterogeneous sentiments, and errors of the day, have been harmonious only in one main point: namely, to put down orthodoxy, by repudiating and denouncing those doctrines

of their church creeds, which they had solemnly professed to believe; and, moreover, very solemnly sworn to preach and defend! This new school, was of course, perfectly willing to make the usual annual sacrifices of TRUTH to peace and expediency! They had ingeniously contrived to get "*the orthodox peace men*" to do their work for them. The Jansenists of old, would have called this *Jesuitism*, and would have taken their measures accordingly. But "*the peace men*," called it brotherly love, charity, liberality, and peace in the house of God!

At the close of each Assembly they, and "*the peace men*" united in giving thanks for the harmony and peace that had prevailed. The new school men were certainly *very sincere*, and so were the peace men.—But their respective motives were at perfect antipodes with each other. The Synod of Glasgow and Ayr of the established church, in the close of the last century, after acquitting the Rev. Dr. M'Gill of the city of Ayr, who had audaciously and impiously impugned *the divinity our Lord*, and the truth of *the atonement*, gave solemn thanks for the unanimity, peace and harmony that had prevailed! Of equally good faith were these thanks of the Assembly for the peace and harmony of the Presbyterian Church!

The designs of the new, or more correctly speaking, the Pelagian school, were easily penetrated. Their peace and forbearance can be accounted for, only on this principle, that they anticipated the majority, and thence the victory over orthodoxy, in a short time. Hence they could, with the greatest ease, and the best grace in the world, dispossess the old orthodox and rightful owners of their theological schools, and their funds: and apply them, in good conscience, and with much fervent devotion to the propagation of Hopkinsian and Pelagian oracles! They were perfectly conscientious; and they followed up the doctrines of Loyala;—namely, the end sanctifies means. These schools were founded; and these funds were established, to propagate Calvinistic Presbyterianism. But as our's—said they, is the only true system under heaven,—it is equitable, just, and righteous to appropriate these conquered funds to a right way, that were unfortunately by weak men, left for a season, to propagate old Calvinism!

Hence the reason, and it has been obvious to all, that nothing can induce the new school to go off, or secede from the Assembly. It is not their policy. It never has been the policy of any error and heresy to do so. Jesuitism does not retreat, nor recede. It stretches out its capacious arms to grasp temporalities and power; in order very conscientiously to extend its system and power. Hence the new school remains in a church whose doctrines, and discipline it most heartily detests. And they smile to see "*the peace men*" so completely out-generalled, as not only to feel no alarm,—but even to do their work for them with a marvellous complacency and fidelity!

And, now the more sensible and faithful see that this unblest policy has ruined the once fair Presbyterian church. By "*expediency*" measures; and the cry of peace, which has been dearer to many than the pure and holy truth of Christ,—they have now transferred into the hands of the Arminian and Pelagian school, the interests of the church of their fathers. And every one sees that the heresy, cunning, and Jesuitism which have thus far triumphed over these good and faithful men, will in a few years, wrest from them their foremost Theological Seminaries, and all their funds! And these bequests, left by devout Christians, to train up youth in honest and pure principles, will be devoted to extend Pelagianism over the land! And when they have secured those noble buildings, and those funds to their purpose, they will as in duty bound,—express their unfeigned gratitude to those members of the General Assembly, called PEACE MEN, by an inscription to this effect, in golden letters, on their gates,—"*These we achieved by our policy, and by the love of peace of our peace men!*"

A few of the faithful brethren have been awakened to see and appreciate their real danger. And they are now taking the only course that can probably be taken, in the present exigence, to save the last citadel from treachery and violence. As for the general interests and prosperity of the Presbyterian Church, *as a whole*,—it is gone beyond human remedy. The power and dominion have passed into the hands of those who, for the last *twenty-five* years, have been assailing the capitol, under a masked battery; and by undermining, and springing mines.

The following has been published by a few very faithful and devoted soldiers of Christ, with a view to rally their friends, in the last assault. And may the King and Head of the Church speed their course; and crown their efforts with victory.—*Ch. Int.*

#### ART. VII. *Act and Testimony.*

*To the Ministers, Elders, and private members of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.*

BRETHREN BELOVED IN THE LORD:—In the solemn crisis, to which our Church has arrived, we are constrained to appeal to you in relation to the alarming errors which

have hitherto been connived at, and now at length have been countenanced and sustained by the acts of the supreme judicatory of our church.

Constituting, as we all do, a portion of yourselves, and deeply concerned, as every portion of the system must be, in all that affects the body itself, we earnestly address ourselves to you, in the full belief, that the dissolution of our Church, or what is worse, its corruption in all that once distinguished its peculiar testimony, can, under God, be prevented only by you.

From the highest judicatory of our church, we have for several years in succession sought the redress of our grievances, and have not only sought it in vain, but with an aggravation of the evils of which we have complained. Whether then can we look for relief but first to Him who is made Head over all things, to the church which is his body, and then to you, as constituting a part of that body, and as instruments in his hand to deliver the church from the oppression which she sorely feels.

We love the Presbyterian Church, and look back with sacred joy to her instrumentality in promoting every good and every noble cause among men; to her unwavering love of human rights; to her glorious efforts for the advancement of human happiness; to her clear testimonies for the truth of God, and her great and blessed efforts to enlarge and establish the kingdom of Christ our Lord. We delight to dwell on the things which our God has wrought by our beloved church; and by his grace enabling us, we are resolved that our children shall not have occasion to weep over an unfaithfulness which permitted us to stand idly by, and behold the ruin of this glorious structure.

"Brethren," says the Apostle, "I beseech you by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment." In the presence of that Redeemer by whom Paul adjures us, we avow our fixed adherence to those standards of doctrine and order, in their obvious and intended sense, which we have heretofore subscribed under circumstances the most impressive. In the same spirit we do therefore solemnly acquit ourselves in the sight of God, of all responsibility arising from the existence of those divisions and disorders in our church which spring from a disregard of assumed obligations, a departure from doctrines deliberately professed, and a subversion of forms publicly and repeatedly approved. By the same high authority, and under the same weighty sanctions, we do avow our fixed purpose to strive for the restoration of purity, peace, and scriptural order to our church; and to endeavor to exclude from her communion those who disturb her peace, corrupt her testimony, and subvert her established forms. And to the end, that the doctrinal errors of which we complain may be fully known, and the practical evils under which the body suffers be clearly set forth, and our purposes in regard to both be distinctly understood, we adopt this ACT AND TESTIMONY.

#### *As regards Doctrine.*

1. We do bear our solemn testimony against the right claimed by many, of interpreting the doctrines of our standards in a sense, different from the general sense of the church for years past, whilst they still continue in our communion: on the contrary, we aver, that they who adopt our standards, are bound by candor and the simplest integrity, to hold them in their obvious, accepted sense.
2. We testify against the unchristian subterfuge to which some have recourse, when they avow a general adherence to our standards *as a system*, while they deny doctrines essential to the system, or hold doctrines at complete variance with the system.
3. We testify against the reprehensible conduct of those in our communion, who hold and preach, and publish Arminian and Pelagian heresies, professing at the same time to embrace our creed, and pretending that these errors do consist therewith.
4. We testify against the conduct of those, who, while they profess to approve and adopt our doctrine and order, do, nevertheless, speak and publish, in terms, or by necessary implication, that which is derogatory to both, and which tends to bring both into disrepute.
5. We testify against the following as a part of the errors, which are held and taught, by many persons in our church.

#### *Errors.*

1. OUR RELATION TO ADAM.—That we have no more to do with the first sin of Adam than with the sins of any other parent.
2. NATIVE DEPRAVITY.—That there is no such thing as original sin: that infants come into the world as perfectly free from corruption of nature as Adam was when he was created: that by original sin nothing more is meant than the fact that all the posterity of Adam, though born entirely free from moral defilement, will always begin to sin when they begin to exercise moral agency, and that this fact is some how connected with the fall of Adam.

3. **IMPUTATION.**—That the doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness is a novelty, and is nonsense.

4. **ABILITY.**—That the impenitent sinner is by nature, and independently of the aid of the Holy Spirit in full possession of all the powers necessary to a compliance with the commands of God: and that if he labored under any kind of inability, natural or moral, which he could not remove himself, he would be excusable for not complying with God's will.

5. **REGENERATION.**—That man's regeneration is his own act; that it consists merely in the change of our governing purpose, which change we must ourselves produce.

6. **DIVINE INFLUENCE.**—That God cannot exert such an influence on the minds of men as shall make it certain that they will choose and act in a particular manner without destroying their moral agency; and that, in a moral system, God could not prevent the existence of sin, or the present amount of sin, however much he might desire it.

7. **ATONEMENT.**—That Christ's sufferings were not truly and properly vicarious.

Which doctrines and statements, are dangerous and heretical, contrary to the gospel of God, and inconsistent with our Confession of Faith. We are painfully alive also to the conviction that unless a speedy remedy be applied to the abuses which have called forth this act and testimony, our Theological Seminaries will soon be converted into nurseries to foster the noxious errors which are already so widely prevalent, and our church funds will be perverted from the design for which they were originally contributed.

#### *As regards Discipline.*

The necessary consequence of the propagation of these and similar errors amongst us, has been the agitation and division of our churches, and ecclesiastical bodies; the separation of our ministers, elders and people into distinct parties; and the great increase of causes of mutual alienation.

Our people are no longer as one body of Christians; many of our church sessions are agitated by the tumultuous spirit of party; our presbyteries are convulsed by collisions growing out of the heresies detailed above, and our synods and our Assembly, are made theatres for the open display of humiliating scenes of human passion, and weakness. Mutual confidence is weakened; respect for the supreme judicatory of our church is impaired; our hope that the dignified and impartial course of justice would flow steadily onward, has expired; and a large portion of the religious press is made subservient to error. The ordinary course of discipline, arrested by compromises, in which the truth is always loser, and perverted by organized combinations to personal, selfish and party ends, ceases altogether, and leaves every one to do what seems good in his own eyes. The discipline of the church, rendered more needful than ever before, by the existence of numberless cases, in which Christian love to erring brethren, as well as a just regard to the interests of Zion, imperiously call for its prompt, firm, and temperate exercise, is absolutely prevented by the operation of the very causes which demand its employment. At the last meeting of the General Assembly, a respectful memorial presented in behalf of eleven presbyteries, and many sessions and individual members of our church, was treated without one indication of kindness, or the manifestation of any disposition to concede in a single request that was made. It was sternly frowned upon, and the memorialists were left to mourn under their grievances with no hope of alleviation from those who ought to have at least shown tenderness and sympathy, as the nursing fathers of the church, even when that which was asked was refused to the petitioners. At the same time they, who have first corrupted our doctrines, and then deprived us of the ordinary means of correcting the evils they have produced, seek to give permanent security to their errors and to themselves, by raising an outcry in the churches, against all who love the truth, well enough to contend for it.

Against this unusual, unhappy and ruinous condition we do bear our clear and decided testimony in the presence of the God of all living; we do declare our firm belief that it springs primarily from the fatal heresies countenanced in our body; and we do avow our deliberate purpose, with the help of God, to give our best endeavors to correct it.

#### *As regards Church Order.*

We believe that the form of government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, is, in all essential features, in full accordance with the revealed will of God; and therefore whatever impairs its purity, or changes its essential character, is repugnant to the will of our master. In what light then shall we be considered, if professing to revere this system, we calmly behold its destruction, or connive at the conduct of those engaged in tearing up its deep foundations?

Some of us have long dreaded the spirit of indifference to the peculiarities of our church order, which we supposed was gradually spreading amongst us. And the de-



velopments of later years have rendered it most certain, that as the perversion of our doctrinal formularies, and the engrafting of new principles and practices upon our church constitution, have gone hand in hand; so the original purity of the one cannot be restored, without a strict and faithful adherence to the other. Not only then for its own sake, do we love the constitution of our church, as a model of all free institutions, and as a clear and noble exhibition of the soundest principles of civil and religious liberty; not only do we venerate its peculiarities, because they exhibit the rules by which God intends the affairs of his church on earth to be conducted; but we cling to its venerable ramparts, because they afford a sure defence for those precious, though despised doctrines of grace, the pure transmission of which has been entrusted as a sacred duty to the church.

It is therefore with the deepest sorrow that we behold our church tribunals, in various instances, imbued with a different spirit, and fleeing on every emergency to expedients unknown to the Christian simplicity and uprightness of our forms, and repugnant to all our previous habits. It is with pain and distrust that we see, sometimes, the helpless inefficiency of mere advisory bodies contended for and practised, when the occasion called for the free action of our laws; and sometimes the full and peremptory exercise of power, almost despotic, practised in cases where no authority existed to act at all. It is with increasing alarm that we behold a fixed design to organize new tribunals upon principles repugnant to our system, and directly subversive of it, for the obvious purpose of establishing and propagating the heresies already recounted, of shielding from just process the individuals who hold them, and of arresting the wholesome discipline of the church. We do therefore testify against all these departures from the true principles of our Constitution; against the formation of new presbyteries and synods, otherwise than upon the established rules of our church; or for other purposes than the edification and enlargement of the Church of Christ; and we most particularly testify against the formation of any tribunal, in our church, upon what some call principles of elective affinity; against the exercise by the General Assembly of any power not clearly delegated to it; and the exercise even of its delegated powers for purposes inconsistent with the design of its creation.

#### *Recommendation to the Churches.*

Dear Christian Brethren, you who love Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, and adhere to the plain doctrines of the cross as taught in the standards prepared by the Westminster Assembly, and constantly held by the true Presbyterian Church; to all of you who love your ancient and pure Constitution, and desire to restore our abused and corrupted church to her simplicity, purity, and truth, we, a portion of yourselves, ministers and elders of your churches, and servants of one common Lord, would propose, most respectfully and kindly, and yet most earnestly,

1. That we refuse to give countenance to ministers, elders, agents, editors, teachers, or to those who are in any other capacity engaged in religious instruction or effort, who hold the preceding or similar heresies.

2. That we make every lawful effort to subject all such persons, especially if they be ministers, to the just exercise of discipline by the proper tribunal.

3. That we use all proper means to restore the discipline of the church, in all its courts, to a sound, just, Christian state.

4. That we use our endeavors to prevent the introduction of new principles into our system, and to restore our tribunals to their ancient purity.

5. That we consider the presbyterial existence or acts of any presbytery or synod formed upon the principles of elective affinity, as unconstitutional, and all ministers and churches voluntarily included in such bodies as having virtually departed from the standards of our church.

6. We recommend that all ministers, elders, church sessions, presbyteries and synods, who approve of this act and testimony, give their public adherence thereto, in such manner as they shall prefer, and communicate their names, and when a church court, a copy of their adhering act.\*

7. That inasmuch, as our only hope of improvement and reformation in the affairs of our church depends on the interposition of Him who is King in Zion, that we will unceasingly and importunately supplicate a Throne of Grace, for the return of that purity and peace, the absence of which we now sorrowfully deplore.

8. We do earnestly recommend that on the second Thursday of May, 1835 a convention be held in the city of Pittsburg, to be composed of two delegates, a minister and ruling elder from each presbytery, or from the minority of any presbytery, who may concur in the sentiments of this act and testimony, to deliberate and consult on the present state of our church, and to adopt such measures as may be best suited to restore her prostrated standards.

\* They can be forwarded to the Office of the Presbyterian, No. 9 George-street, Philadelphia.

And now, brethren, our whole heart is laid open to you, and to the world. If the majority of our church are against us, they will, we suppose, in the end, either see the infatuation of their course, and retrace their steps, or they will at last attempt to cut us off. If the former, we shall bless the God of Jacob; if the latter, we are ready for the sake of Christ, and in support of the testimony now made, not only to be cut off, but if need be, to die also. If, on the other hand, the body be yet in the main, sound, as we would fondly hope, we have here, frankly, openly, and candidly, laid before our erring brethren the course we are, by the grace of God, irrevocably determined to pursue. It is our steadfast aim to reform the church or to testify against its errors and defections, until testimony will be no longer heard. And we commit the issue into the hands of Him who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.

**Ministers.**—James Magraw, Robert J. Breckinridge, James Latta, Ashbel Green, S. D. Blythe, S. H. Crane, J. W. Scott, W. Latta, R. Steel, A. A. Campbell, John Gray, J. Scott, J. L. Wilson, A. M'Farlane, Jacob Coon, I. N. Candee, R. Love, J. W. McKennan, D. R. Preston, W. Wylie, W. M. Engles, C. H. Mustard, J. C. Watson, W. L. Breckinridge, J. H. Symmes, I. V. Brown, D. M'Kinney, G. Marshall, E. H. Snowden, O. Harris, W. J. Gibson, W. Sickles, B. F. Spilman, G. D. M'Cuen, G. W. Janvier, S. G. Winchester, George Junkin.

**Elders.**—S. Boyd, E. Vanhorn, W. Dunn, J. Algeo, J. Agnew, H. M'Keen, C. Davis, W. Wallace, A. D. Hepburn, J. P. Engles, J. M'Farren, A. Symington, A. Bayless, W. Agnew, G. Morris, H. Campbell, T. M'Keen, J. Wilson, D. B. Price, C. Hotchkiss, C. Woodward, W. A. G. Posey, J. Carnahan, M. Reed, J. Steel, G. Durfor John, Sharp.—*Presbyterian.*

Philadelphia, May 27, 1854.

#### ART. VIII. Summary.

**OBITUARY OF WILLIAM TURNBULL.**—Our worthy and highly esteemed friend, WILLIAM TURNBULL, departed this life on the 15th of May last, at his residence in Warren county, Illinois, to which place he had removed about two years since. He was a native of Scotland, and emigrated, if we mistake not, shortly after the close of the revolutionary war. We are unable to trace all his wanderings as a pilgrim upon earth. But we know that for a considerable time he resided near Nashville, in Tennessee. But being vexed from day to day with the *unrighteousness of slavery*, he removed to the State of Ohio, where he settled near Centerville, Montgomery county, with a good wife, and a numerous family of small children. Here it pleased God who gave, to take away the *desire of his eyes*. A reasonable time afterwards he married a widow lady, who had no children of her own, but who proved an excellent mother to her children by adoption. He afterwards removed to Greene county, where he lived our neighbor until his family was grown, and chiefly married. He was an honest and honorable man in his worldly dealings. He was industrious and economical, which enabled him to be liberal in the cause of benevolence, but was judicious in the selection of objects. He was an obliging neighbor and true friend. He was charitable to the poor without ostentation. Naturally of a sharp, but not ungovernable temper. He was a valuable member of the Secession Church for more than fifty years. Zealous in the support of truth, according to his view of it. In all his movements within our acquaintance, he made it a point to settle where he could enjoy gospel ordinances, and in every congregation acted as a ruling elder. He had a good library, a strong mind, and excellent memory. Hence he possessed a valuable stock of useful knowledge. He had long been subject to bilious attacks. But some two or three weeks before his death he was attacked with the asthma, but partially recovered. He relapsed, and the silver cord was broken. He went to his rest, an old man, and full of days, and died as he had lived, a man of prayer. *The righteous hath hope in his death.*—*Hanover Miscellany.*

**ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD.**—The Associate Presbytery of Alleghany met at Bethel, on Wednesday, June 4th, when Mr. John P. Dicky was ordained and installed into the pastoral charge of the United Congregations of Bethel, Turtlecreek, and Freeport. Rev. Joseph Scroggs presided at the ordination, and preached from 1. Cor. iv. 1. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God." Rev. James M'Carrell read the ordination vows, and Rev. John Dickey delivered the charge to the minister and people.

**NOTE.**—The conclusion of Mr. Morrisson's Letter—the notice of a new edition of the Gospel Mystery of Sanctification, by Walter Marshall—and some account of the proceedings of the General Synod of the Reformed Dutch Church, are unavoidably deferred to the August number.



## CONTENTS.

	page		page
ART. I. Some improper or doubtful expressions considered, (continued from p. 20,)	33	ministers, Elders, and private members of the	
ART. II. Watt's Preface to the Psalms,...	36	Presbyterian Church in the United States,	60
ART. III. Observations on Remarks on Dr. Bullions' Tract on Repentance,.....	43	—As regards doctrine—Errors,.....	61
ART. IV. To Correspondents,.....	48	—As regards Discipline—As regards	
ART. V. Proceedings of the General Assembly,.....	57	Church Order,.....	62
ART. VI. The Presbyterian Church,.....	59	—Recommendation to the Churches,....	63
ART. VII. <i>Act and Testimony</i> —To the Mi-		ART. VIII. Summary,.....	64
		ART. IX. Ecclesiastical Record,.....	64
		ART. X. Note,.....	64

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ALBANY, June, 1833.

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